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ABSTRACT

These proceedings contain 18 presentations on three main themes: adult education policy, role of universities/adult education centers, affirmative action, accreditation of courses, curriculum, and rural adult education. "Welcome and Introduction" and "Introducing Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi" (Walters) precede the keynote address, "Transformative Adult Education in the Age of Structural Adjustment: A Southern African Perspective" (Mbilinyi). Other presentations are as follows: "Continuity Not Rupture: An Analysis of Adult Education Policy Proposals Emanating from the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI)" (Walters); "Inserting Feminism into Adult Education" (Wolpe); "University-Based Literacy Theory and Practice in South Africa: Planning the Work" (Prinsloo et al.); "Adult Education Centres--Brokers for University Extension" (Von Kotze, Stanford); "Six Criteria for Non-Formal Course Provision" (Hemson); "The Role of Adult Education in Affirmative Action Policy: What Should We Be Doing to Promote National Equity?" (van Niekerk); "Competing Concepts of Affirmative Action in South Africa" (Castle); "Critical Reflection on CACE's [Centre for Adult and Continuing Education's] Challenging Racism Work" (Samuels); "Integrating Adult Education for Credit into the Professional Preparation Programs for Adult Education Practice in Lesotho at the National University of Lesotho" (Ntimo-Makara); "Accreditation of Adult and Continuing Education Programs in Institutions of Higher Education in Southern Africa" (Mohapi); "Facilitating Access to the Peninsula Technikon for Adults with Incomplete/Inadequate Secondary Education" (Isaacs); "The University of Namibia's Experiences in the Education of Adults at a Distance--Lessons for Southern Africa" (Beukes); "Texts and Adult Education" (Geidt); "Is the Method Monster Ever a Mouse?" (Smith); "Changing Adult Education Practice through Independent Study" (Saddington); "Issues in South Africa's Future Development" (Matshazi); and "Challenges Facing the Adult Educator and the Rural Masses (Weitz). An overview of the conference provides a summary of three panelists' presentations (Mbilinyi, Naidoo, Millar). (YLB)

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PROCEEDINGS OF

THE UNIVERSITY-BASED ADULT EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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ADULT EDUCATION: ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

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PROCEEDINGS OF

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EDITORIAL NOTE

A number of presenters at the conference reworked their papers while others submitted their papers without making any changes. I have also included two papers, by Vernon Weitz and M.J. Matshazi, under the theme Rural Education, which were not presented at the conference because they were unable to attend, due to the political situation. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the authors for their contribution to the conference and the proceedings.

Joe Samuels
October 1993

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Welcome and Introduction

Shirley Walters
Centre for Adult And Continuing Education
University of the Western Cape

We are gathered here today at another momentous moment in the history of South Africa – shock waves reverberate throughout the country. The nation is traumatised by the violent death of Chris Hani. Across the political spectrum there is a profound realisation of the vulnerability of the political situation in South Africa.

The context shapes so much of our work as University-Based Adult Educators – so inevitably the current events will weave themselves through our discussions in the next two days! As indicated, the Conference has already been affected by the aforementioned events. There are a number of people who are unable to attend because of the difficulties of mobility being experienced in their areas. They are Dr & Mrs Meshack Matshazi, from the University of Fort Hare, Lungisani Kunene, from the University of Natal/Pietermaritzburg, Vernon Weitz, from the University of Transkei, and Nomvula Mtetwa. The programme will need to be adjusted accordingly.

To those people who were able to attend, I'd like to extend a very warm welcome on behalf of the CACE staff, particularly to those of you who have travelled a long way to be here. It is very pleasing to have colleagues from other countries in the southern African region amongst us.

Background to the Conference

Last year saw the first annual conference of South African university-based adult educators. I will briefly give some background to these conferences; this was elaborated on by Robyn Mackie last year.

In South Africa there are 21 universities. Of these the University of Cape Town, the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of the Western Cape have chairs in adult education. Natal (PMB/DBN) and the University of Transkei have departments/centres of adult education while several of the historically 'white' Afrikaans speaking universities have Continuing Education Departments which have different traditions and orientations. They are not involved in training adult educators.

Over the last 10 years there have been various meetings of the universities who do train adult educators – in the last two years we decided to formalise an annual meeting. Last year the 'inner circle' met in Pietermaritzburg for a very rich exchange. This conference follows on that. At that conference, the view was expressed that the smaller conference was a precursor to a con-

ference for Southern African University-Based Adult Educators. UWC was asked to host it. Joe Samuels was asked to co-ordinate it by CACE. Conferences of this kind will therefore become regular events, with next year's being shaped by us here.

We are conscious as organisers of the predominance of South Africans at this conference. It will be easy for a South African rather than a southern African focus to develop, and there may often be times when we will need to be reminded of this bias by those of you, who are not from South Africa. We apologise in advance if this tends to happen. As South Africans we are only learning how to be more international/more African. To illustrate this point, many South Africans (even the progressive ones) when talking about non-South Africans refer to people as coming from "overseas" even when they come from north of the border! We look forward to the contributions which can help us to understand and locate ourselves more fully in the southern African region. We are aware of South Africa's controversial position in the region in the past, present and as we go into the future. We hope this conference can provide us with some space to grapple with our location in the region.

The programme has been constructed starting with the broad and flexible theme: Adult Educators: Issues for the Future. This was done to allow the shaping of the conference to be done by you, the presenters. The main themes that emerged are:

- AE and transformation in the current socio-economic and political context;
- AE policy;
- Affirmative action;
- The role of universities;
- Accreditation of courses; and
- Curriculum.

Thank you for offering such a rich array of papers.

As the Organising Group, we are confident that the space has been created for very rich discussions and debates over the next two days. We hope that you will enjoy your stay and you will feel really pleased that you gave up your time to be here. As the Organising Group we would like to invite you to raise any issues or make suggestions as we go along. We would like you to start sharing the responsibility with us for making this meeting a success!

Introducing Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi

Shirley Walters

I have the privilege of introducing to you Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi, who is to present the keynote address to us. I will introduce Marjorie to you through the words of a full-time peasant farmer with whom Marjorie has worked in Tanzania. Her name is Rebeka Kalindile. Quoted in a chapter of a book edited by Magdalene Ngaiza and Bertha Koda, *Unsung Heroines*, Rebeka says of Marjorie:

"As the producer of this text, she (Marjorie) has had a major influence on its contents: challenging me with questions, asking for more details, encouraging me to tell more of my stories. Mbilinyi was born in New York, USA, in 1943 (around the time of my youngest daughter, the one I lost – Marjorie seems to have come to take her place, and maybe it's mutual, since she lost her mother when she was 16 years old). She came to Tanzania to get married to her fiancé in 1967, and became a citizen of Tanzania and bore her first child in that year. Her husband is a mNgoni from Songea, a mtani or joking relation, because we waNyakyusa fought wars with waNgoni in the old days. Mbilinyi gave birth to only four children, but three have survived compared to my four out of nine. Her youngest, and the only boy, died just after reaching a year of age; this is a painful subject for Marjorie as for me, but the death of children is still too common in our country, which is why we agreed to include the stories of these deaths in our writing ...

Besides being a wife and mother, Mbilinyi teaches at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. She's been doing research and writing about issues concerning women for many years now, along with education and agriculture reform."

This passage gives us a glimpse of the multiple facets of Marjorie's life, and a feel for who she is and what she stands for. To add to Rebeka's description, I can say that Marjorie is a Professor of Education at the Institute for Development Studies. She obtained a doctorate in education in 1970, in the USA. She is a prolific writer and her research is wide-ranging. She has made an important contribution to the theory and practice of participatory research since the late 1970s.

One of the reasons why we invited Marjorie to participate in the conference, is to assist us as South Africans to locate ourselves more firmly in the southern African region; to assist us in our understanding of the political-economy of the region and adult education's place within it.

On behalf of all the participants I wish to welcome you, Marjorie, most warmly on your first visit to South Africa, and we look forward to interacting with you during the next couple of days. Thank you for agreeing to be with us. We look forward to your presentation.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

TRANSFORMATIVE ADULT EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

A southern African Perspective

Marjorie Mbilinyi

Institute of Development Studies,
University of Dar-es-Salaam,
Tanzania

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INTRODUCTION

I want to begin by thanking the organisers of this conference for inviting me to speak about issues of adult education from a southern African perspective. It is an honour and a pleasure for me as a Tanzanian to address this conference of adult educators from South African universities. I am also happy to enter South African space for the very first time, in support of the liberation goals which inspired Tanzanian people and other front-line nations to join forces with South African liberation movements.

We come to this conference from different locations, identities and positions. South Africans still live in a context of colonial political structures and apartheid practices. Those of us from 'independent' southern African countries face the intensification of neo-colonial politics, economic underdevelopment and financial conquest. Our identities are shaped by our gender, class, race-ethnic and imperial-national locations, and by the way we respond to these locations and actively position ourselves.

Whether located in or out of South Africa, however, we share certain conditions in common:

- Heightened concentration of power in the hands of a few transnational corporations at the global and national level;
- The growing incorporation of local and national economies in southern Africa into the global capitalist economy;
- Growing poverty for the majority *and* wealth for a few in each nation;
- The dismantling of welfare and affirmative action programmes at national and local level; globally, the shift in donor priorities from programmes which prioritised *human development* and national self-reliance, to austerity measures which support the economic needs of big business;
- Multi-party forms of representative democracy, and the expansion of space for community-based action and non-governmental organising; and
- Increasing national chauvinism, sexism and racism in popular culture and official state ideology, and the growth of single-issue identity politics as one response.

Adult educators are challenged to take a clear position versus the growing power of the global imperial state (which consists of the donor development agencies led by the World Bank/IMF, the powerful Western nation-states, and the client African nation-states), and the corporate economic and financial interests it represents. The severity of the crisis we face, and the blatant nature of imperial domination, make 'neutral' positions untenable. Educators and researchers, like other citizens, are either for or against: imperial domination; authoritarian rule at household, national and global level; sexism, racism and 'ethnic cleansing'; the growing power of big business and heightened exploitation of workers worldwide.

Methodological and conceptual questions are among the most significant issues in adult education today. Structures and practices in adult education partly reflect dominant ideas and discourse which go unchallenged. Mainstream bourgeois and Marxist theories have both failed to meet the challenges of modern imperial/neo-colonial society. By questioning our methodologies and concepts, we can create a more transformative methodology and epistemology of adult education. Alternative development strategies and oppositional ideologies are required which are powerful enough to challenge imperial hegemony, and provide the disempowered with

effective tools of analysis and action on their own behalf. The disempowered (women, working people, black and other oppressed ethnic groups) should be active participants in the process of transforming adult education and creating a transformative education process.

I believe that the theories of Marxist political economy, critical cultural studies, and critical Third World feminism have the most to contribute to a transformative adult education. By examining the terrain of critical Third World feminism, I will explore the following issues in adult education:

- The context of education and research in southern Africa today;
- Dominant social relations within the education and research process, and their impact on knowledge;
- Epistemological issues in adult education/research, especially those which are oriented towards 'African women'; and
- Future strategies to create and sustain transformative adult education.

I identify myself as a critical Third World feminist. Critical Third World feminism integrates analysis/practice around gender, imperial, class and 'race'/ethnic relations (Sen and Grown, 1987). My thinking draws heavily on the writings and experiences of other African and Third World feminists, especially those living and working in 'the south'.

Critical Third World feminists have had a hard time representing themselves and their world view to others in Africa, because of the dominance of mainstream thought and the distorted way feminisms are represented in dominant discourse; the unequal structures of communications, education and research which discriminate against women, especially against Third World women living in the south; and denial among most progressive men, unable to confront their own power and complicity in shaping an oppressive and exploitative world.

What is critical Third World feminism? How does critical Third World feminism differ from other feminisms? What contribution can it make to transformative adult education? I will try to answer these and other questions in this article, as my contribution to our evaluation of achievements and limitations within adult education, and the exploration of future strategies for analysis and action.[1]

Methodological issues will be explored in the second section, in which I summarise key concepts in epistemological work, and introduce a schematic representation of a conceptual framework to study adult education. In the third section, I discuss the context in which we live and work, and in the fourth section, I explore the different meanings of women and gender. The concepts of women and gender have been highly contested in feminist circles, as a result of the recognition of differences among women and variations in gender relations. However, state policy, and many adult educators, project static notions of an unproblematic and homogeneous 'woman', 'the rural woman' and 'traditional gender relations'.

Feminisms in Africa are contrasted in the fifth section, in order to clarify the difference between different feminist approaches and highlight critical Third World feminism.

Adult educators have different theoretical paradigms, methodologies and epistemologies. Our politics differ, as well as our personal locations and the way we position ourselves in the world, which is the theme of the sixth section. My own understanding and positionality has been shaped by my personal history and present locations, which reflect a rich array of multiple

positions and identities (a teacher, writer, activist, wife, mother, a Tanzanian born in the USA of Anglo parentage, a citizen of the world). In the seventh section, I will argue that our identities are not given or reducible to our origins, skin colour, or material locations. Identities or positions are the product of struggle and represent an achieved, not an ascribed trait (Hawkesworth, 1989; Malson et. al., 1989).

In the concluding section, I briefly explore the implications of these methodological and epistemological issues for transformative theory and practice in adult education.

The methodology used to write this essay will be discussed in the last part of this introductory section.

TONE AND FORMAT

I have consciously used the word 'I' to situate myself in this text, so as to help demystify research and writing. My identities are multiple, however, and better represented by "I's".

Although writing is usually an individualised activity, it is a social process. 'I/we' write/communicate to 'others' — the other participants in the University-based Adult Education Conference; the 'community' of critical scholars and activists in Africa and worldwide; University students and grassroots participants in animation workshops. The impact of ideas depends partly on how they are 'read' or interpreted by others, and on events in the 'material world'.

Ideas are collective as well as individual — the product of social processes, the result of language and discourse. Our ability to think new thoughts and imagine new connections is derived from constant questioning, listening, and acting; alone and in co-operation with others.

It is true that many people feel growing despair in southern Africa, provoked by a range of events:

> (For example, the three burials I attended recently, two for young people who had died of AIDS; the lack of electricity for four consecutive days and nights, ruining my writing schedule; delayed wage payments arising from bureaucratic inefficiency; growing conservatism in academia and increased state intervention; 'government' decision to sell viable nationally-owned industries to foreign capital; youth's ignorance about colonialism and racial apartheid in the past, their commitment to a bourgeois vision of upward mobility and 'modernisation'.)

Accompanying despair is joy, however, arising from the solidarity which links women and men of diverse locations in joint struggles against the global imperial order and its class/gender/race-ethnic dimensions. Transformative adult educators are building viable support systems to sustain analysis/action during the hard times ahead (Imam and Mama, 1988). Alternative forms of education and communications are rapidly emerging; the popularisation of science, research and feminism is definitely on the agenda.

Critical thought and writing can be enjoyable and inspiring, by combining different styles in an accessible and honest fashion. To do so is essential if we intend to change the world. You can't provoke many people to re-examine their lives, or decentre mainstream thought, or take political action, if only a few people can or want to read our work.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Key Concepts

Theory, method, epistemology and methodology are concepts frequently used in debates on methodology in adult education. Drawing on Harding's work (1987: ch. 1), the term theory will be used for the construction of concepts to analyse specific problems or topics, and/or to examine, compare and contrast the connections among observed and imagined phenomena.

Method refers to the techniques used to gather evidence or 'collect data'. There are three major methods used in research, (1) questioning and listening; (2) observing; and (3) reading, re-reading, or examining documents of different kinds, often though not necessarily written texts. Feminists usually use all three methods in their work.

Methodology is a theory and analysis about the kind of methods and general research approach which is most appropriate for a given body of theory, such as political economy or critical feminism. Methodological debates may centre around theoretical issues, such as the appropriate concepts to analyse 'the state' and the 'construction of class and gender relations', or link theory with method by challenging the research procedures adopted in empirical investigations. The latter discussion usually raises epistemological questions at the same time.

There is *no one transformative methodology*. Researchers adopt different approaches depending on context, positionality, the problem under study, the theoretical framework, and epistemological position.

Epistemology concerns different theories about knowledge, and specifically about how knowledge is produced, distributed and consumed.

> It answers questions about who can be a 'knower' [Can women?]; what tests beliefs must pass in order to be legitimated as knowledge [Only tests against men's experiences and observations?]; what kinds of things can be known [Can 'subjective truths' count as knowledge?]... Feminists have argued that traditional epistemologies, whether intentionally or unintentionally, systematically exclude the possibility that women could be 'knowers' or agents of knowledge; they claim that the voice of science is a masculine one; that history is written from only the point of view of men (of the dominant class and race [and imperial/neo-colonial location]); that the subject of a traditional sociological sentence is always assumed to be a man. (ibid: 3, original emphasis, my [insertion])

I added the concept of '*imperial/neo-colonial*' to the locations mentioned by Harding in the quotation above, because of its centrality in Africa. A major criticism I have of most critical feminist work carried out in the 'north' (by European, Third World or African-American scholars), is the failure to name and confront imperialism and imperialist relations. People refer to gender, class and race, or gender and race alone, without challenging global imperialism. 'Race' also needs to be expanded to include ethnicity, which does not always fit 'white/black' discourse.

In Box 1, I have summarised the main *epistemological questions* asked in participatory research and transformative political economy.

Who is doing the research?

— About whom?

What procedures/methods are used?

Who owns the tools/assets used in the research production process?

Who controls them?

Who defines the problem being studied? Constructs the research instruments? Interprets the information acquired? Writes up the final report?

Who finances the research?

Who is the audience?

How will knowledge be reproduced and distributed?(Written? Accessible language?)
How accessible will the findings be to the population under study?

What will be done with the findings, especially with regards to state policy?

Who are the real beneficiaries of the research?

BOX 1: Epistemological Questions

These questions about the research process are related to broader questions: What is knowledge? What is reality? The connection between the two? What is science? What is non-scientific knowledge? How is knowledge produced? Who should research? Who should they research? What should they do with the knowledge they produce? What kind of issues need studying?

Most research on adult education in Africa has been produced within neo-positivist epistemology, including work within mainstream bourgeois and Marxian theories. The presumption is that the only 'true' knowledge is that produced by scientists and experts.

According to neo-positivist outlooks, the objective of science is to produce neutral, objective knowledge about the world situated 'out there'. The researcher tries to remain detached from the people under study, so as not to 'bias' the findings. Scientific procedures are refined to remove all sorts of sampling and data collection errors, in order to ensure the reliability and the validity of the evidence. A sample is selected from the population under study which is said to be representative, and the researchers generalise from the sample to the entire population. Research instruments (e.g. questionnaires, observation and interview schedules) are developed which focus on observable and if possible, quantifiable data. Every effort is made to use methods which can be replicated by others, so as to test the truth of the data. As a result of their epistemological principles, which demand observable, quantifiable and replicable data, neo-positivist researchers tend to choose uncomplicated problem areas and produce descriptive, ahistorical work, avoiding 'the big questions'.

Marxian and critical feminist epistemologies deny the possibility of neutral, value-free science and knowledge. Researchers are part of the world under study. The conception of the

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problem under study, the construction of research instruments, and interpretation of data, are all effected by our multiple identities and locations.

Some of the most significant phenomena in society are not directly observable, including gender, imperial, class, and race-ethnic relations. Seeking to explain and to change these relations, researchers enter exploratory terrain and look for explanations for events and patterns of behaviour, for example, by studying the unconscious of the individual psyche or social structures.

At the same time, we need accurate, systematic information about the world, and a way to assess the reliability and validity of information provided to us. I believe that many of the research procedures developed by positivist researchers are useful for transformative adult educators. We need to know who said what? Where were they located in the social relations discussed above? Were statements made spontaneously, or in response to a set of questions? What questions? How were they constructed and why? Researchers should present the research design used, and the social relations of the research process in their writing. They need to bring themselves and their positions into the terrain of the research process itself, and in their presentation of the knowledge acquired. Readers have no other basis with which to assess where the ideas came from.

Many feminists have labelled questions of validity and reliability, and even abstract analysis, as 'masculinist' and oppressive. Some Africans and 'Africanists' similarly argue that science is 'Western' or 'white'. Populists may argue that science is bourgeois. I think Hawkesworth (1989) provides us with an alternative view. She urges us to reconceptualise and reclaim rationality and 'science'; to reject totalising concepts of reason while acknowledging the power of a new rationality. Human rationality is ever-expansive and plural, and includes "perception, intuition, conceptualization, inference, representation, reflection, imagination, remembrance, conjecture, argumentation, justification ... mediation ...(Malson et. al., 1989: 13).

Hawkesworth provides a way of going beyond the limits of relativism in participatory research paradigms, by shifting our focus to include 'claims about the known' as well as 'questions about knowers', adopting a conception of 'cognition as a human practice' (p. 332). She points out that feminist (and Third World) critiques of 'science' and formal research methodology, shifted attention from the validity of specific claims advanced by men, to the source of knowledge, the knowers. As a result, 'the terms of debate are shifted toward psychological and functionalist analyses and away from issues of justification' (p. 333).

No one vision or gaze is free of bias and distortion. There is no one authoritative knowledge; should we argue otherwise, we build a case for authoritarianism, the way the Mobutu regime has used 'authenticity' in Zaïre, for example. Nor is there a privileged gaze from locations of the oppressed; the people in those locations are not homogeneous or unitary subjects. Their vision, like everyone else's, is partial and bound by the limitations of their experience and oppression.

An understanding of cognition as a human practice provides the basis for a critical feminist and transformative epistemology. Transformative epistemology critiques 'deductive' and 'inductive' logic and the pursuit of 'objective' knowledge. The dichotomy between 'facts' and 'values' does not hold, after appreciating the power of discourse. Instead, ""knowing" presupposes involvement in a social process replete with rules of compliance, norms of assessment, and standards of excellence that are humanly created"" (p. 342). Being forms of human practice, they are subject to continual critique. The knowledge produced is understood to be the

product of human practice, not 'objective' knowledge or a body of 'real' 'facts'. Knowing is a complex process, 'heavily dependent on what questions are asked, what kind of knowledge is sought, and the context in which cognition is undertaken' (p. 345).

Using this approach, transformative adult educators can examine the different stages of the research/writing process, and explore the effects of the different theories and methods used. Contrary to the extreme position within poststructuralist thought, that there is no 'real' world out there with which to judge 'the truth and falsity in divergent interpretations', Hawkesworth argues that we can develop standards for distinguishing partial views and false beliefs and wilful distortions.

> In the absence of claims of universal validity, feminist accounts derive their justificatory force from their capacity to illuminate existing social relations, to demonstrate the deficiencies of alternative interpretations, to debunk opposing views.
>
> Precisely because feminists move beyond texts to confront the world, they can provide concrete reasons in specific contexts for the superiority of their accounts.
>
> Such claims to superiority are derived not from some privileged standpoint of the feminist knower, nor from the putative merits of particular intuitions, but from the strength of rational argument, from the ability to demonstrate point by point the deficiencies of alternative explanations. At their best, feminist analyses engage both the critical intellect and the world; they surpass androcentric accounts because in their systematicity *more is examined and less is assumed* (p. 351) [breaks and emphasis added].

Advances made in challenging mainstream and counter-mainstream epistemology have been presented in this sub-section. Below, I wish to explore methods and a conceptual framework for analysis and action in adult education which are being used at grassroots level in Tanzania.

TRIPLE-A ANALYSIS AND A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The methodology used to prepare this paper combines a Triple A Cycle of assessment-analysis-action with a conceptual framework which embraces multiple layers and sectors of society and the individual. The conceptual framework used to guide my analysis of adult education is summarised below:

- The conditions of women and men can be best understood if situated in the context of gender/class/imperial/race-ethnic relations involving both women and men;
- Social relations in adult education are rooted in economic, political, cultural and ideological structures of society; they are produced (and reproduced) on a daily basis by the actions, ideas, and discourse of individuals and groups;
- Social relations are the products of historical processes of conflict and change; they are therefore changeable as a result of contestation, resistance, and struggle;
- Gender relations differ in different 'locations' of nationality, class, ethnicity-race, and imperial north/south relations;
- Different layers of meaning and different levels of causality exist in society; the most effective strategies for change are those which explore all the different layers and levels, and focus at least to some extent on the basic, root causes of oppression and exploitation;
- Social relations cut across different sectors of society — economic, cultural, psychological;

multi-disciplinary analysis and multi-sectoral strategies of action are potentially the most powerful means to understand and change them;

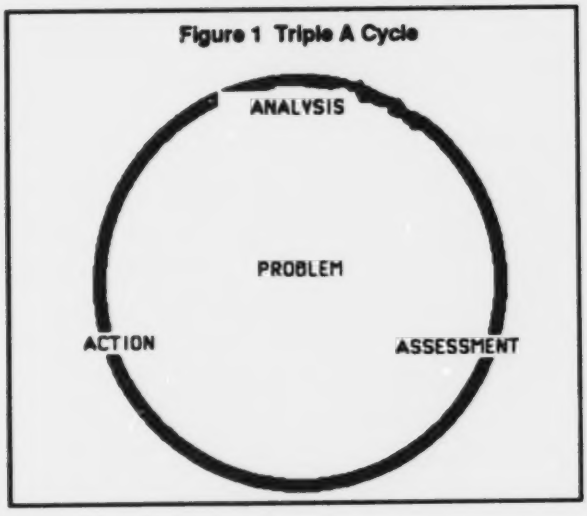
- Long-term transformation of oppression and exploitation depends on social mobilisation, involving the majority of women and men who are poor, labouring, disempowered, in grassroots organisations led by themselves; and
- Experts, writers, and other middle class women (and men) can make an important contribution to social transformation, especially through participatory research/education and animation techniques, so long as they recognise the limits of their social position and are committed to radical social change of the status quo.

The **Triple A Cycle** represented in Figure 1 reflects the way most people solve everyday problems: they assess a problem, analyse its causes, and act to solve it — and then, reassess the situation, and start the cycle all over again. The Triple A Cycle has been systematised within the Child Survival, Protection and Development (CSPD) programme of the Tanzanian government and UNICEF, and is being used to facilitate local level analysis and action by and on behalf of women and children.

A graphic portrayal of a conceptual framework for studying adult education (Figure 2) provides guidelines to analyse causes of problems and success in promoting transformative adult education processes, at the immediate, intermediate, and basic levels. Using the framework, people can explore the interaction among different factors and sectors, and different levels of society. Figure 2 portrays the multi-dimensional aspects of social relations in adult education, and their multi-layeredness.

The 'problem' we focus on may be 'education levels and needs', or the nature of the adult education curriculum. 'Different incomes' and 'different opportunities' within the education system are *immediate causes* of the problem. Education, culture, the gender division of labour and social services represent *intermediate causes*; and the web of resources, structures, external economic systems, institutions, and distribution/consumption patterns connote the *basic causes*. We cannot expect to transform social relations in adult education and 'really' liberate women (and men) until we effect change at all levels, especially the basic root causes.

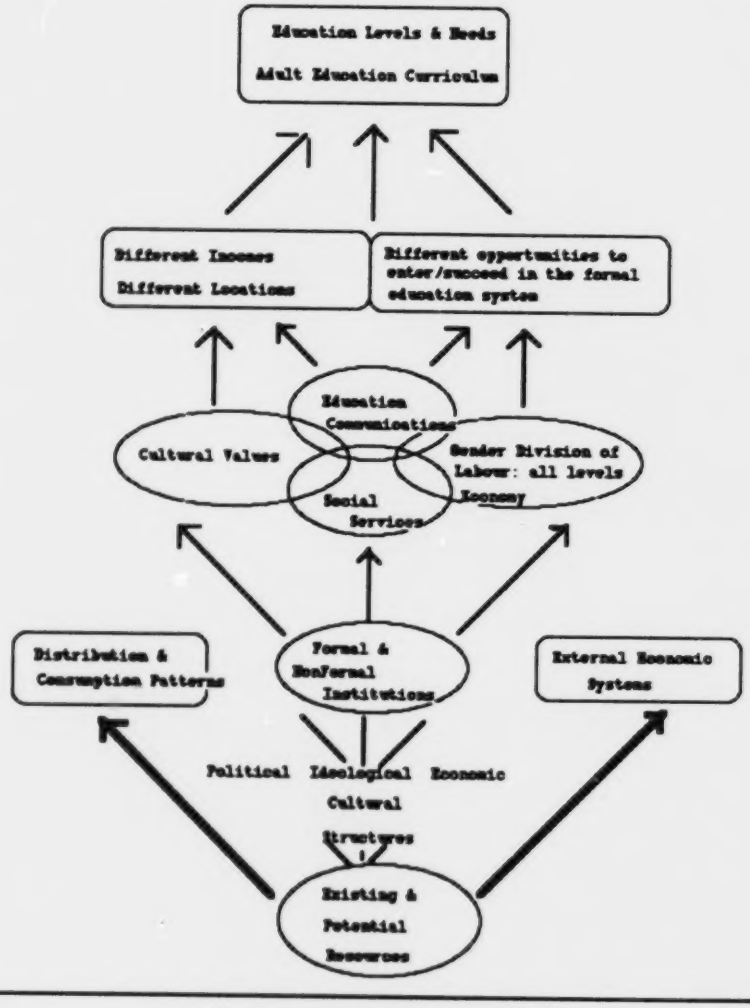
Figure 1 Triple A Cycle



Both the Triple A Cycle and the conceptual framework have their roots in participatory research debates of the 1970s. They are aspects of most animation programmes in Tanzania. Basic principles of animation, participatory pedagogy and guided discovery learning are followed. Animation techniques are used to guide transformative analysis/action in adult education, because they:

- Are participatory;
- Produce a high level of output of new and creative ideas;
- Bring conflicting ideas and relations out into the open;
- Provide a means to resolve most conflicts 'among the people';
- Are fun and pleasurable; and
- Raise self-esteem.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Adult Education



PRACTICAL NEEDS AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS

Most adult education programmes in Tanzania have focused on practical needs, that is, on people's basic needs for survival such as food, water, fuel, income, nutrition education, and the skills needed to access these needs. These are of special relevance to women because of the gender division of labour and women's role in reproduction.

Strategic interests refers to a wider conceptualisation of the problem of gender and other social relations. It focuses on the basic causes of illiteracy and a class-biased curriculum, for example, and adopts a multisectoral approach which links cultural, economic, political and environmental factors together. Whereas the aim of practical needs approaches is to *improve* people's welfare, that of strategic interests approaches is to *transform* social relations. Box 2 provides a summary of the differences between practical needs and strategic interests, focusing on gender issues.

The dichotomy between 'practical' and 'strategic' may be false and should not be reified. What we are highlighting is the difference between *improvement* and *transformative* analysis and action. Practical needs cannot be ignored in a transformative programme, and 'practical' action which targets immediate needs is necessary to win support at the local level. The practical needs are not considered to be the final goals, but their significance should not be forgotten. Parents who have experienced child death want their children to live, for example – their prioritisation of child health helps explain the success of CSPD programmes in Tanzania, which have begun to address structural issues.

Helping a woman feed her children better, or get easier access to water, however, may reinforce the gender division of labour in which women feed babies, men do not. Practical orientation also emphasises immediate levels of causality, such as low incomes and unequal opportunities in education (Figure 2) and ignores the basic causes of inequality.

One reason for this emphasis is because immediate needs are more easily perceived by the actors in a situation. Basic and even intermediate causes are more complex, less visible, and are often hidden by dominant discourse. Another explanation for the bias towards practical needs is that the steps necessary for the former are easier to implement, by local people as well as by government and donors. Building a well, providing a water pump, and even the creation of an 'training-for-income-earning project' are easier to do than transforming the way people relate to land, water, and basic social services.

They are also much less controversial. The disempowered have to have faith in their ability to empower themselves, before they will be ready to risk the anger and hostility of the wealthy and powerful people in society. Individual acts of resistance are highly significant, but without some basis of moral support and solidarity from other women and men, the 'rebellious' get exhausted and mentally stressed. Moreover, their actions will have limited results, because oppression and exploitation depends not just on one husband or employer. We need to focus on 'the big', as well as 'the small', which keep things the way they are.

PRACTICAL, IMPROVEMENT	STRATEGIC, TRANSFORMATIVE
a) immediate, short term	a) long-term
b) relates to daily needs: food, housing, water, income, healthy children ...	b) relates to disempowered position: subordination, lack of resources, lack of education, vulnerability to poverty and violence ...
c) easily identifiable by people concerned	c) basic causes of disempowered position and the potential for radical change are not always identifiable by people concerned
d) can be addressed by provision of specific inputs: food, maize mill, credit, clinic, training ...	d) can be addressed by education, consciousness-raising, increased self-esteem, promoting/strengthening people's organisations, political mobilisation
e) involves people as recipients, perhaps as beneficiaries, and participants	e) involves people as agents or enables people to be agents
f) can improve the condition of people's lives	f) can transform the position of people in society
g) usually does not alter existing roles and relationships	g) can empower people and transform relationships

BOX 2: Practical Needs and Strategic Interests – Improvement and Transformative Approaches

Source: Adapted by Marjorie Mbilinyi. Based on Linda Moffat (Match/CCIC GAD Workshop, February 1990). Originally developed by Carole Houlihan, November 1989.

A strategic interests approach focuses on problems and developments which are rooted in the basic causes of oppression and/or liberation. These basic causes concern differential access to and control over productive and political resources and benefits, which depend on relations of power and the way society is organised at all levels (from household to global).

Women/disempowered are conceptualised differently in these two approaches. The improvement approach projects the image of the disempowered as *victims*; whereas the strategic transformative approach assumes that they are *active agents*, capable of acting on their own behalf, and therefore potentially transformative.

The position which is allocated to the 'target' group in adult education programmes also varies, depending on approach. In the practical, improvement approach, grassroots participants usually lack power of decision-making or control over resources. Instead, they become *passive recipients*. Grassroots people become the major *decision-makers* in the strategic transformative approach; they take control of major resources themselves, and empower themselves. Strategic approaches reflect a programme for empowerment, which is outlined below.

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Empowerment[2]

Empowerment is a process which increases the capacity of women and other disempowered people to:

- Analyse and know the world at all levels (household-village-national-global);
- Act on their own behalf; and
- Increase their power and control over the social resources necessary for sustainable and dignified life.

Mobilisation approaches which strengthen empowerment include:

- Animation;
- Relevant life-long education;
- Community participation in all stages of development planning and management (participatory planning and management); and
- Advocacy by the disempowered themselves, voicing their own demands, seeking popular support for their own agendas, lobbying the government and donor agencies.

Approaches which may be useful under certain conditions include:

- Campaigns; and
- Education at the level of the community, defined from above.

Empowerment is not:

- Self-help; or
- Self-reliance, unless there is a change in power relations.

A contradiction has emerged between concepts of empowerment and sustainability, as shown below.

Sustainability or empowerment or both?

One definition of sustainability adopted by the government and donor agencies, stresses cost sharing at household and community level. Efforts are made to increase the contributions of money and other resources from individuals and communities for education, health, and other social services. Increased cost sharing is not combined with increased power and control over resources at all levels, and becomes a form of taxation.

Cost sharing discourse presents a false imagery of 'the people' as being freeloaders, dependent on the government and donors for handouts, lazy, unwilling to provide for themselves. The discourse deliberately masks the contributions already made by people and communities to services (e.g. digging wells and roads, building schools and teachers' houses, paying contributions to the government, subsidizing the government and big business through currency regulations for export crop payments).

The beneficiaries are the rich and powerful in a position to pay for better services and government attention, the more advantaged ethnic groups and regions, and men. Market principles dominate everyday decision-making about (1) who should go to school; (2) which economic

activities should be supported; (3) who should live. Economic 'rationality' and profits take the place of moral or ethical judgements. Women, disadvantaged districts and ethnic groups, and the poor, are the losers.

In conjunction with Structural Adjustment Policy, the aim of cost sharing and other austerity measures is to reduce contributions for social services and infrastructure from central government and donors, so as to free 'capital' for investment in big business. Burdens for reproducing the labour force are shifted from business and the government to the people themselves, especially women. The ultimate goal is to increase the profits of big business and entrepreneurs, by reducing wage levels and alternative forms of employment, and increasing the export of cheap foodstuffs and raw materials overseas.

An *alternative definition of sustainability* is linked to empowerment at household and community level. Efforts are made to increase local initiatives in assessment, analysis and action:

- Mobilisation of local resources at household, community and district level, under local control, which includes the contribution of money and other resources;
- Increasing control and power in decision-making over resources generated at local level, eg foreign exchange earnings, taxes and development levies, road tolls; and
- Increasing access to and control over resources which are deposited and co-ordinated at higher levels of the economy and government.

Communities, the poor, and women, become more self-reliant about certain things, but are also successful in accessing more resources from 'outside'. Demands on central government and donors increase, rather than decline, as people become more aware of the structure of the economy and the state, and assertive in demanding their citizenship rights and entitlements. Citizenship rights and entitlements are central components of collective self-empowerment, discussed below.

Citizenship rights and entitlements [3]

Collective self-empowerment occurs as people act together to acquire collective and individual citizens' rights to the bases of social power:

- **Financial and other resources** (e.g. land, farm inputs, markets) to secure adequate food, water, health services, shelter, other basic needs;
- **Time** free from all forms of work, to engage in educational, political and recreational activities;
- **Space** in which to carry on production and reproduction activities;
- **Relevant knowledge** (knowing what and knowing how) about e.g. family planning techniques, nutrition, how to organise community programmes and animated groups, citizenship rights and entitlements;
- **Accurate knowledge** concerning the local community as well as nation, region, world;
- **Social organisation** to enable the collective struggle for other basic rights;
- **Social networks** of kin and fictive kin, clintilistic networks of who-knows-who, and networks between grassroots organisations and supporters at a wider level, including political parties, national and global state institutions, and donors;
- Access to the **instruments and tools of production**, including good health.

Approaches like the Triple A Cycle and the conceptual framework, and animation, are oriented in the direction of generating relevant and accurate information by the people themselves, with the active support of external facilitators and animators. Democratic social organisation is strengthened at local level, providing people with the pressure groups needed to demand and get more democracy at higher levels. Political space for organising is widened within the community and civil society, especially necessary for women, the poor, the disempowered in general.

Households, local communities, NGOs, and the disadvantaged lack the necessary resources to provide these social bases on their own, especially the majority who are poor. The people increasingly demand and get access to social services and other resources from the state as their entitlements, while generating local resources to support community programmes.

Social mobilisation helps democratise the state, *including donors as well as national government*, at all levels. Social policies facilitate and support collective self-empowerment, and increase the flow of resources to communities and the disempowered, instead of to the rich and already well-endowed.

The disempowered in society, including the impoverished, women, and children, are entitled to expect the government to guarantee collective and individual rights which powerful forces seek to deny. Community and collective organisations ensure that the state carries out this function. For example, the courts and the National Assembly in Tanzania have begun to take a stronger stand against rape and sexual abuse of children, because of growing publicity and public action on the issue, in turn the result of NGO organisation led by a group of women journalists (TAMWA).

Participation in community-based analysis/action strengthens people's capacity to govern themselves. Women are often leaders in community-based programmes, as well as the most numerous actors on the ground, carrying out door-to-door campaigns, organising money-making sales of crafts and foodstuffs.

The process of social accumulation found in community- and household-supported programmes (e.g. community construction of schools, clinics, and wells) can be empowering so long as an organisational framework is developed which increases accountability of central government and donors to local government, NGOs, and community organisations. This necessitates the decentralisation of finance functions of accumulation and allocation, of planning and expertise, and the development of local capacity to produce and use information relevant to planning and management.

A transformative approach to adult education is rooted in collective self-empowerment along the lines outlined above. Below, I want to analyse key economic and political factors which condition our work in Africa.

CONTEXT

Adult education is heavily influenced by the present context of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP), and the accelerated development of the 'new imperial world order' in the 1990s (Meena 1991d, Mbilinyi 1991b, Suliman 1991). Structural adjustment programmes (SAP) is a shorthand way of describing the imperial policies being implemented by nation-states and donors, as a way of restructuring African economies in line with the imperatives of advanced capitalism.

Global capitalism was in severe recession during the last two-and-a-half decades, increasingly dependent on deficit spending in the United States, for example, and state support for the military-industrial complex. As incomes declined and unemployment rose in the 'north', Western governments shifted to the right in both domestic and foreign affairs. Strict conditions have been attached to the funding of bilateral and multilateral development agencies. Parliamentarians demand that agencies show the positive impact of 'aid' programmes on the domestic business of donors, in terms of increased exports of their goods and services, and the hiring of personnel (technical assistance). In the case of Africa, donors insist on the 'rolling back' of decolonisation measures, including protectionist tariffs, subsidy support systems for national producers and traders, and state regulation of currency and trade. State-supported social welfare systems are steadily being dismantled, with nothing of significance to replace them for most of the poor women and men, boys and girls, in urban and rural areas.

The impact of cost sharing is especially devastating in the poorest countries of southern Africa, like Tanzania. Social democratic policies had led to significant achievements in health, education, water systems, and worker benefits in the 1970s, as the popular classes struggled for practical and strategic needs. Many of the worst disparities in social services and employment associated with the colonial apartheid system were abolished or reduced. These achievements were limited, however, by authoritarian administration at all levels, and the growing power of financial capital.

The social reforms of the 1970s have rapidly been replaced by Structural Adjustment policies, similar in every African country. Austerity measures and tight fiscal policy have created a hostile environment for indigenous producers and traders in the middle class, at the same time as liberalisation opened the doors to the goods, services and personnel of trans-national corporations (TNCs) based in the north. National capital cannot survive without collaborating with foreign capital, whereas foreign businesses, and local companies with some family members in the north, thrive.

Major changes have occured in gender relations at household and community level in different class and ethnic groups, stimulated by women's increasing participation in the labour market, in market-oriented production and trade, and in household provision of cash consumption needs. Signs of change include increasing gender conflict over consumption and income distribution at household and wider levels, open resistance against oppressive relations at home or the workplace, and the growth in female-headed households and, paradoxically, in the number of self-declared middle class 'house-wives'. These developments are uneven within the continent and within each country, and depend upon the actions of different kinds of women and men, situated in different social locations. They signify growing gender consciousness (and consciousness of class, race-ethnic and imperial relations) among many women.

Feminists are part of the changes taking place in gender relations at household and community level, and are situated within the wider context wherein gender relations are a major site of struggle — in the workplace, the media, the courts, religion, and state politics.

Historical material conditions and gender studies [4]

The vagaries of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) and specific gender policies of nation-states and the World Bank/IMF and other donors, have erected new and 'old' barriers against the advancement of African women (Dawn 1991, Gladwin 1991, Mbilinyi and

Mbughuni 1990, 1991, Meena 1991d). At the same time, male-biased imperial policies and worsening conditions have radicalised a growing number of young educated women and men, and fostered a growing democracy movement. 'Democracy begins at home' is becoming a rallying cry for women in different classes, confirming that the boundaries between 'home', civil society and the state are neither fixed nor natural.

Our choices are partly constrained by the historical material conditions of work, including access to funding, equipment, time, infrastructural support ranging from regular electricity to secretarial services and personal computers, and well-stocked libraries. Most research on gender takes place outside of the supportive environment of a department of gender studies or a course on 'women and education'. Women usually face and resist different forms of male bias and misogyny in studies and work, including outright abuse and sex discrimination (Dirasse 1990, Gaidzanwa 1991, Imam and Mama 1988, Mbilinyi and Mbughuni eds 1991). Women's education groups have provided the space and resources needed to promote gender studies and critical Third World feminism.

Accompanying gender battles have been struggles against neo-colonial relations in the knowledge process, partly emanating from the dependence on donor funding and the growing power of the global imperial state in our countries. Intellectual work of academics has been internationalised by means of the social relations underlying the production of knowledge, and assessed in the global marketplace of ideas and intellectual goods and services. 'Northern' researchers monopolise access to and control of resources, and have gate-keeping power to determine which 'southern' women and men will be invited to join them. Indigenous and other African women have had to resist and struggle against neo-colonial, class, racial and ethnic barriers at the national and global level. Critical feminists in Africa have to struggle against mainstream thinking as well. Working women and men have yet to access the resources needed to control their own research/writing process, and remain dependent on the goodwill of middle class researchers.

A whole series of epistemological questions about social science research and history were raised in Africa and the rest of the south, beginning in the 1960s when colonial and modernist/developmentalism theories were critiqued; again in the 1970s when nationalist and under-development theories were under question; in the 1970s and 1980s, when a concerted effort was made to distinguish between mechanical and dialectical approaches within Marxism; and, in the 1980s, to grapple with the effects of crisis and 'indirect' rule through nation-states and imperial donor agencies. These analyses were often situated in the context of national liberation struggles, which continue today in South Africa, and sharpened the terms of the debate.

Participatory education/research emerged during the 1970s as one response to the concerns noted above. Participants in participatory research debates introduced the issues of location, identity and positionality long before they were fashionable in academic circles.[5]

In this section I have examined the context in which adult education is situated in southern Africa. In the next section I wish to explore the uses and abuses of the concepts, 'woman' and 'gender'. These words have different meanings for different approaches in adult education.

THE CONCEPTS OF WOMEN, MEN, AND GENDER

I will examine the way gender operates both as a tool of analysis and a set of social relations (Flax, 1989) in this section.

Women are highly differentiated from one another; as are men. Women and men in the same class-national-ethnic location are more alike than different. Women are not a homogeneous category. The concepts of gender and women are therefore highly contested concepts: critical feminists have argued the non-existence of a unitary subject called 'woman' or 'women' (or man/men).

Gender is a set of defining characteristics, defining people as masculine and feminine. Although mainstream discourse would have us believe we are one or the other, human beings are some of each, and usually more of one. These characteristics are socially constructed, they are not inate, biological, 'natural'. Moreover, they are not determined once and for all, be it by culture, political economy, or biology, and can be changed (Malson et. al., 1989). Our conceptualisation of 'women' and 'men' is partly produced by language and discourse.

Gender relations are socially constructed and deconstructed as a result of the behaviour of women and men themselves. They are historical, changeable, subject to abolition and transformation through everyday happenings as well as periodic moments of crisis and transformation. Gender analysis examines the multiple layers of social relations and identities among women and men, individually and collectively, and the complex interconnections among gender, imperial, class, race-ethnic relations.

Gender analysis shifts out of the home and the 'private/personal' world, and explores the construction of gender relations in the community, the school, the government, the 'economy'. The dichotomies constructed by dominant discourse in support of male supremacist relations are critiqued in theory and practice: public/private, personal/political, base/superstructure, production/reproduction, real/ideal, nature/nurture, urban/rural, and, of course, female/male (Stamp 1989, Eisenstein 1988, Mbilinyi 1977, Mama 1991).

'Gender is ... a relation of domination' (Flax, 1989: 67), but not all gender relations are dominating. Some gender relations are more egalitarian and complementary than others. For example, in a recent study of gender relations among plantation workers in the sugar industry, we found that relations among workers were more egalitarian than those between the male foreman and the female worker. Women workers were often forced to 'have sex' with their foremen in order to keep their job and get paid without pay deductions (ongoing research on sugar plantations in Tanzania), whereas male workers lacked the same power over fellow women workers. Women may face sexual harassment from other workers, however, especially if they are a minority or work in non-traditional jobs.

Human beings are differentiated by male and female physiological characteristics, bodily rhythmns, biological needs, including food, water, sleep, sexual fulfilment of some kind, life itself. At the same time, the meaning of these differences is not 'given'. There is no logical reason why biological attributes like body shape and the presence or absence of certain sexual organs should determine how much education and salary we get, or our position in society.

The meaning and impact of biological sex differences also varies, depending upon our social locations. As Laketch Dirasse (ibid: 51) explains,

> ... The content of the identity that attaches to these givens, the specific roles and modes of behaviour that go with them are culturally acquired and variable across cultures.

The 'biological givens' need not be ignored, however (Dirasse, 1989: 51). They matter a lot in neo-colonial situations where disease and death are everyday matters. The presence of illness and death has increased, for some of us by our own ageing, as well as by the onslaught of AIDS and other infectious diseases. Living in a context of war, armed robbers, and periodic drought and famine, makes basic needs of food, water, and physical safety a paramount concern.

A major challenge today is to identify the way gender interacts with imperial, class and race/ethnic relations. For example, most causes of high infant, child and maternal mortality are socially constructed and rooted in imperial/class relations. Members of the middle and upper classes – women and men – have higher survival rates, are better nourished, and usually can meet their other physiological needs without major difficulty. Their life expectancies are much higher in the north, with the exception, significantly, of groups like African-American men, and members of the Native American population. State policies, institutionalised racism and the dominance of market-oriented philosophy threaten the survival of anyone who resists capitalist economy, or becomes 'useless appendages' (as indigenous women and children were once referred to in South African discourse, to justify urban influx controls; present day immigration policy in the north closely resembles apartheid policy in South Africa).

We can conceptualise these relations as *'quadruple' oppression: women being oppressed by gender/class/race-ethnic/imperial relations*. The concept of 'quadruple' is not additive. It does not mean we set up a pecking order, determining who is more or less oppressed. Instead, the concept asks how the different sets of social relations connect, interact, oppose, contradict? Our question is never abstract, but rather contextualised in a specific location, by examining concrete social relations.

The social construction of gender is part of ruling relations (Smith, 1986): the ideas and practices of ruling at different levels (household, national, regional, global). Research on the way states and dominant classes have invented and manipulated concepts of 'sex', gender, 'tribe', and all the other varieties of 'us' and 'them', informs us about how rulers rule in pre-colonial, colonial and neo-colonial societies. Research on resistances and struggles, on 'subaltern' voices of oppressed women and men, provides us with alternative constructions of gender relations. Gender research can explore oppositional and subaltern relations which challenge the ruling relations.

The multiple meanings of woman and gender have been discussed in this section. In the next section I will compare and contrast the most prevalent approaches in feminism, and show why critical Third World feminism provides a powerful contribution to transformative political economy in adult education.

FEMINISM AND FEMINISM

I would like to emphasise from the start that there are many different feminisms in Africa, and worldwide. Broad distinctions are mere abstractions, and ignore the varieties of approaches and concepts within each broad category.

Women (their oppression and liberation) may not be an adequate marker, since this ignores the instability and varied nature of 'women', and the way men have been oppressed by gender relations. Similarly, there can be no one 'African feminism' or 'Third World feminism', because there is no one homogeneous group or reference point. Researchers use one or the

other feminist theory in their work, usually a combination of several. Nor are the different feminisms as exclusive as the literature makes them appear.

Radical feminists generally adopt women/men, male/female dichotomies. Their concepts of women and men tend to be essentialising and naturalising. Women are 'essentially' nurturing and co-operative, men are 'essentially' competitive and instrumental. Such concepts become totalising, i.e. they generalise from one trait or aspect of a person to the whole and ignore possibilities of difference and change. Moreover, the cause of the different essences is reduced to biology by adopting concepts of 'inate' differences between women and men. Concepts of trans-historical patriarchy are situated within radical feminism.

Bourgeois liberal feminism aims to increase opportunity and equality within society as it is presently constructed. It lacks an explicit critique of imperial and capitalist structures and tends to adopt accomodating positions *vis-à-vis* the state. The theory and practice of Women in Development (hereafter WID) is one example, which now dominates most women-oriented programmes and gender-related research.[6]

Nationalist feminism emerged as a form of resistance against imperial and European/white domination in Africanist feminist studies. Theoretical contributions are many and diverse, including the 'discovery' of women's contributions to anti-colonial struggles, their presence as members of ruling classes in pre-colonial societies, and the need to re-evaluate our understanding of the impact of colonialism and capitalism on gender relations.

Many nationalist feminists adopt homogenising concepts about 'African culture' and 'African women', however, and reproduce the colonial constructs they began critiquing. Racial stereotypes about African women replace concrete, empirical analysis. European conceptions of the African as the essential 'other' have been internalised as adequate representations and negate a diverse and hetereogeneous reality. Imam and Mama (1991: 10), using Okot p'Bitek's poetry as illustrative, note:

> The docile, obedient, village woman, custodian of culture; the simple peasant grinding millet outside the productive life of the community; the matriarch of the shrine and the marketplace, the corrupt urban prostitute: these are the stereotypes of much Africanist, Western feminist and African male scholarship on African women, such as it is.

Romanticising and homogenising the past contributes to the 'invention of tradition', and can be used by male (and female) rulers to endorse new forms of gendered authoritarian rule. Nationalist feminism, or 'false particularism' as critiqued by Imam and Mama (1988: 14),

> in stressing difference from the West, homogenises Africa and promotes stereotypes which ignore variations in historical experience, economic structures, cultures and changes over time. This reaction has yielded the essentialist and ahistorical myths of 'The African Family', a single 'African Culture' or 'African Philosophy' and 'the Golden Age of pre-colonial Africa'.

Nationalist feminism ends up supporting the status quo, because of its failure to critique the interconnections among gender, class, ethnic and imperial relations. Nationalist theories and epistemologies have been used to betray the majority by the new 'black' ruling class, in Africa as in North America (King, 1989). Women were specifically betrayed by nationalism in African politics, just as working people were betrayed by state socialism.

Marxist feminism includes a wide range of approaches, from neo-Marxism to the more dogmatic and orthodox positions of mainstream Marxism. In the past, mainstream Marxists consistently tried to silence debate and alternative approaches at the University of Dar-es-Salaam and elsewhere. Feminism was one of their favourite 'targets' — many of us have been scarred by their macho behaviour and authoritarian tactics.

Orthodox Marxist positions focused exclusively on economic issues, and neglected politics, culture, psychology, discourse. The economism and dogmatism of mainstream Marxist theoreticians in the region produced stultifying notions about, for example, the 'real' proletariat (leaving out most women, peasants, and people in the 'informal' sector), base/superstructure discourse, and the secondary nature of gender and race. Neo-Marxists rejected the base/superstructure paradigm of orthodox Marxism, and recognised the power of the subjective level. Nevertheless, class continued to take pride of place, its definition grounded in economic relations.

Marxist feminists explain women's oppression in terms of their location in class relations, with respect to ownership and control of the means of production and position in the labour force. Women's liberation reportedly depends on entry into wage employment, market-oriented production, and membership of the 'working class'. Their consciousness is derived from their economic position. In spite of efforts to insert such questions as reproduction, family and community into the concept of class, the approach limits our attention primarily to 'economic' matters (Mbilinyi, 1984c).

Marxist feminist positions on policy matters have also been incorporated within state discourse on WID: (1) remove barriers to women's full participation in the economy; (2) encourage women to produce more, get more income, get jobs. The combination of WID's focus on income-earning activities for women (i.e. commoditisation of women's work) and SAP has meant that women bear even more responsibility for family maintenance than before. Upward pressures on wages and crop prices are reduced, and women's working day gets ever longer.

Many transformative theories and methods have their roots in historical materialism, such as the significance given to 'consciousness-raising', and the awareness that people can change their identity through struggle. The more significant contributions of historical materialist thought to adult education for me, are the following:

- The power of class analysis, so long as it incorporates the intersection with gender, imperial and race-ethnic relations;
- The materiality of the world, including the subjective level;
- The significance of historical analysis in combating essentialising and naturalising ideas about the universality and inevitability of women's oppression, for example, or African poverty and under-development;
- Structural analysis of economy, politics, culture, discourse;
- The power of the subjective level in changing society, with its own autonomy and effect; and
- The potential for change and re-education at the individual and collective levels, arising from engagement in concrete praxis of struggle and resistance.

Post-structuralist feminism

The development of discursive analysis contributed to the possibility of a more nuanced gender analysis, which explores changeable identities and positions in histories and societies. Analysis of positionality and identity explores two central issues:

- The multiple, complex, changing and contradictory nature of positions and identities (individually, collectively); and
- The impact of positions and identities on research, writing, and reading/interpretation.

The post-structuralist feminists turned our attention towards the process of research and writing (and reading). They insisted that the researcher put herself into the terrain of investigation and analysis even more systematically than earlier efforts within participatory research. Colonial and post-colonial myths have been created about African women and men, which have been incorporated in mainstream ideology and used by donor agencies and governments to oppress women (Mama, 1991). Mohanty (1988, et. al., 1991) and Minh-ha (1989) have emphasised the colonising impact of words and analyses based on concepts like 'Third World women' or 'the rural woman' or the 'natural' 'African woman'. These concepts colonise women by homogenising them; they deny women their histories, their individualities, their multiple identities.

Many feminists who are inclined towards activism have been made uneasy by the political implications of post-structuralism, however.[7] The instability and plurality of the concepts of women and feminism, and the resulting fragmentation of feminist organisation and discourse may mean the loss of the social base (women) for political action.[8] The substitution of gender for women distracts from the central focus, which is, after all, the liberation of women from (classed/raced/imperialist) gender oppression. Critics have argued that unitary structures of exploitation and oppression are 'real', and that part of the task of discursive analysis is to deconstruct and decentre dominant structures (see the debate in Malson et. al., 1989; also Stamp, 1989).

Addressing this problem, Harding (1989) argues that solidarity can be mobilised around those specific goals which can be shared, but that feminists need to relinquish the goal of unity around a shared social experience as women, which is imaginary. Similarly, African adult educators may need to reconsider the notion of a shared social experience as 'Africans', or as 'workers', or as 'illiterates'.

Ruling groups in Africa legitimise authoritarian rule in response to the democratic movement by means of a discourse about tradition, custom, and ethnicity. Suggestions to bring back 'chiefs' and 'native court systems' in Tanzania, for example, are specifically targeted against 'unruly' (i.e. unruled) women and youth. Promoting ethnic divisions deflects popular attention from the exploitative nature of ruling classes, nation-states and global imperial capitalism. The debates on 'What is an African?' and 'What is tradition?' which are taking place in adult education circles, and the strategy proposed by some to return to 'traditional community' and pre-colonial society, illuminate the problem.[9] An imaginary *Golden Age* in Africa (or Asia, or Americas, or anywhere), reproduces colonial imagery about African community and 'tribe' which is factually incorrect and colonising.[10]

Women and men of different social groups can unite together around specific action strategies to fight imperialism, racism, sexism, and capitalist exploitation, without having to assume they are members of one 'loving family' or community. A crucial point to me is that you can

work with people/groups without having to love them: *coalition is not 'home'* , as Bernice Reagon has so eloquently argued (1983: 360). At the same time,

> It must become necessary for all of us to feel that this is *our world*. And that we are here to stay and that anything that is here is ours to take and to use in our image. (p. 365)

Reagon's (1983: 356–7) argument against single-issue identity politics and for 'coalition politics' is especially enlightening:

> You don't go into coalition because you just like it. The only reason you would consider trying to team up with somebody who could possibly kill you, is because that's the only way you can figure you can stay alive.
>
> We've pretty much come to the end of a time when you can have a space that is 'yours only' — just for the people you want to be there ... There is no hiding place. There is nowhere you can go and only be with people who are like you. It's over. Give it up.

Coalition and the crossing of (class/gender/race-ethnic/imperial) borders is necessary to successfully face the growing power of big capital and the far right. Coalition does require space within for the different groups and issues. Reagon notes the sometime need for separation so as to get nurturance as women, indigenous African people, Wachagga or Masai. However, the nurturing place can become a destructive place.

> At a certain stage nationalism is crucial to a people if you are going to ever impact as a group in your own interest. Nationalism at another point becomes reactionary because it is totally inadequate for surviving in the world with many peoples. (p. 358).

Reagon's analysis is grounded within, and has helped to shape, what I have called critical Third World feminism, discussed below.

Critical Third World feminism

Critical feminism incorporates elements from Marxist, nationalist, and post-structuralist feminisms. It focuses on all four social relations in analysis and action: gender, imperial, class, race-ethnicity. The 'Third World' component highlights its location within and of the neo-colonised nations of the world (including African-Americans and indigenous Native Americans), and the anti-imperialist position held by critical feminists in the north or the south.

Critical Third World feminists incorporate historical analysis in their work. Multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional, they link economic, political, cultural and psychological issues together. Adopting innovative methodology and epistemology, they combine the subjective and the objective realms, and make the research/writing process part of the object under inquiry. Their analysis has shown how gender is constructed as well as deconstructed within different feminist discourses (Mohanty, 1987, 1988, 1991; Minh-ha, 1989; Imam and Mama, 1988; Stamp, 1989).

Experience is not taken for granted; instead, it is necessary to theorise about experience and construct new visions of the future. No one gaze is privileged or omniscient.

Critical feminism represents African women (and men) in a different way from all the other approaches: hetereogeneous, strong, potentially powerful women, prepared to resist oppression

and to adopt many different strategies of survival and struggle. The individuality of different women shines through, and colonising stereotypes about 'the African woman' and 'tradition' are deconstructed. Most remarkable and hopeful of all, analyses of differences highlights sameness as well. Women and men are free to explore their individual idiosyncracies, the common parameters of their existence and identities, and the differences and divisions among themselves and between them and 'others'.

I believe that African-based critical feminism provides the following major contributions to the general body of critical feminist work, and to transformative adult education:

- Analysis of imperialism, embedded in class/gender/race-ethnicity;
- A more coherent and nuanced critique of 'the' state, including the African nation-state and donor agencies; and
- A critique of class relations among women within the same and different ethnic and national locations.

I have compared and contrasted different feminist theories and their impact on methodology and epistemology here. In the next section, I wish to explore the concepts of identity and positionality in more detail, partly using my 'self' as illustrative material.

ON PERSONAL LOCATION AND POSITIONING

Adult educators/researchers have become increasingly self-conscious about their location in the education and research process, and the social relations within which they produce and transmit knowledge. Anthropologists coined the term 'self-reflexivity' for inserting themselves as researchers into the terrain of the research: in the planning stage (the research proposal); the entire research process; writings on findings; and overall analysis. I believe that educators need to act similarly, to place ourselves into the terrain of knowledge.

Women and men's lives are experienced differently, because we live differently structured lives, arising from the intersection between gender, class, imperial and race-ethnic (and other) relations. The inter-relationships among and between these major social relations are complex and contradictory. The definition of who is privileged and disadvantaged, oppressor and oppressed, changes, depending on where we 'stand' and how we position ourselves in an active sense.

My own identity is not clear-cut or straightforward; you can't read what I am from what I look like. Quotation marks are deliberately placed around white and black here, because of my belief that these are imaginary distinctions. White and black do not correspond to 'real' skin colour; we are all multi-hued, individually and collectively. The meanings given to our various skin shades are socially constructed, multiple, unstable, changeable.

So, what am I? A middle-class Tanzanian woman; privileged in certain situations by virtue of 'white' skin, Anglo-American origins, and middle class location; oppressed in my neo-colonised and female locations; oppressed/suppressed by conservative forces because of my anti-imperialist critical feminist positions. I must also comply with expectations of a good Mngoni wife, mother, and in-law; a neighbour who attends everyone's funeral and wedding; a hostess who provides instant hospitality to unexpected guests, regardless of other plans; a middle-aged 'elder' (50 years old) who is supposed to be maternal and sexless. I am part of an aca-

demic community, a respected Professor; accepted as a citizen of Tanzania, in spite of 'white' skin and American imperial origins. My husband and I have three beautiful daughters, and a lovely baby boy who died at the age of 13 months. My family have experienced my rage at all things mean, unjust, sexist, in our personal lives, and remain steadfast if critical supporters.

I am the mother of four 'black' Wangoni children. In some situations people define me as 'black' 'native' (mwenyeji), in contrast to West Africans and African-Americans, for example, who may be called 'Europeans' (Wazungu) because they don't speak Kiswahili and behave differently.

Sometimes I am discriminated against for being 'white', or because of my American origins; dislike of Europeans is not surprising given our history of slavery, racism, and colonisation. Other times I am favoured, e.g. by restaurant waiters who expect better tips from foreigners; most 'whites' are non-Tanzanians. Some Europeans bond with each other and try to include me in their imaginary shared unity. In most situations, however, the 'race' issue does not arise. Other markers of difference take priority, especially class, gender, and nationality.

Governments try to impose official conceptions about nationality, sex, race and class. People will often reject dominant labels and images of who or what they are. Critical feminists value what others are alarmed by — multiple, changing, unstable identities. Still, I must contend with the ambivalences, inconsistencies, and contradictions among the identities within and in the way others try to define me and the situations I'm in.[11]

Each one of us, writer and reader, can locate our multiple positions, in Table 1. Additional attributes of power and privilege (power on the left side of the dichotomy) are gender identity (hetereosexual/ homosexual), age (old/young), marital status (married/unmarried), fertility (fertile/childless). The cells in Table 1 are not fixed, their boundaries are unstable, and the direction of the power relationships is not unilinear.

How do adult educators position themselves *vis-à-vis* 'working people'? Other strata in the middle classes? The ruling classes? Do 'we' adult educators share the same locations in society, nationally and globally? In fact, *who is this 'we'*? Do 'we' exist? In Box 3, an imaginary conversation between three voices, is used to explore these questions.

In this section I have analysed the politics of personal location. In the next section, I examine how adult educators can cross borders and position themselves beyond their locations.

AN ACTIVE POSITIONALITY

In the sections above, I have shown how critical Third World feminists have studied the discourse of gender and its impact on analysis and action, and the effect of different gender (imperial/ class/race-ethnicity) locations and positions. How we can move beyond our locations, build on our differences and similarities, become more than 'society' or 'the state' ordains us to be, is the subject of this section. The following statement by Flax (1989: 71) is useful and clarifying.

> Feminist (transformative) theorists are faced with a four-fold task. We need to (1) articulate feminist viewpoints of/within the social worlds in which we live; (2) think about how we are affected by these worlds; (3) consider the ways in which how we think about them may be implicated in existing power/knowledge relationships; and (4) imagine ways in which these worlds ought to/can be transformed.

TABLE 1: Personal Location: Power and Privilege

SOCIAL RELATIONS	PRIVILEGE/POWER	DISADVANTAGE/ LESS POWER
Gender	*Men*	*Women*
Imperial	*'North'*	*'South'*
Class	*Rulers (ruling class globally, nationally) Capitalists & Top Bureaucrats [middle class have relative privilege]*	*Ruled/Exploited – working people (including small producers/–traders) [middle class are marginalised, pauperised under SAP]*
Race/Ethnicity	*Of European origin, globally; dominant ethnic & indigenous groups, locally/nationally*	*Of non-European origin, globally; indigenous peoples, or disadvantaged 'tribes'*

BOX 3: Who are We?

How do we define ourselves?

'Progressives' *'In solidarity with the oppressed'*

Ah ha! Which oppressed?

'Organised labour'

What about casual and temporary workers, many of whom are women and children? And all the women and men who work in the so-called informal sector?

'Well, they're not "real" proletariate, you know; but we are interested in the informal sector, and women, the most vulnerable.'

Sounds condescending to me. Women are not victims. Which women are you referring to?

'The poor women, especially the rural women, and especially in the Third World'

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Ah, the rural women. How are they different from urban women? There are rich land-owning women, you know, in rural areas, and the new entrepreneurs of government credit schemes? Cities have growing numbers of homeless and impoverished people?

[silence]

Who are 'Third World Women'?

[Exasperated] 'You know who I mean, the **most exploited** women, and men, everywhere.'

Does that mean you won't deal with gender conflicts and other divisions amongst 'us' intellectuals?

[mumbles] 'Middle class women. Corrupt governments.'

What about your privileged position in the north?

'Oh, imperialism is no longer an issue; colonialism is nearly over, now that Mandela is free. South Africa will soon be independent, like other African countries.'

'Besides, look what you people have done with your independence, anyway. Nationalism is a dead issue.'

Is imperialism dead? The global imperial state now rules, led by the World Bank/IMF and the major 'Western' powers. State militarisation accompanies structural adjustment, not only in 'the south': 10,000 armed police and soldiers marched into Los Angeles to quell civil 'unrest' after the Rodney Hill case!

'Exactly — the real issues are about class, race and gender.'

Is race the same as imperialism?

'You are raising too many issues. Making things complicated. We need to have simple issues, to rally round the people.'

Who are 'the people'?

'Will you shut up?'

NO!

Our work can be compensatory and critical at the same time. We can recover the histories and theories of women and other disadvantaged people, while recognising the partial nature of their vision. Each set of multiple locations provides a different way of seeing; we can acknowledge the limitations and scope of vision within each without privileging any one gaze. Knowing that consciousness is never fixed, because discursive boundaries change with historical conditions (Lauretis, 1986: 8), means we can recognise individual potentiality for crossing cultural borders (Reagon, 1983).

June Jordan's work (1987: 12) helps clarify issues for me, especially given my own multiple identities, and the confusing and ambivalent responses they arouse in others.

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> I think there is something deficient in the thinking on the part of anybody who proposes either gender identity politics or race identity politics as sufficient, because *every single one of us is more than whatever race we represent or embody and more than whatever gender category we fall into.* We have other kinds of allegiances, other kinds of dreams that have nothing to do with whether we are white or not white ... *each one of us is more than what cannot be changed about us.* [emphasis added]

Jordan adopts an international perspective which transcends 'race' or 'gender' issues, and includes imperial and class relations:

> If I, a black woman poet and writer, a Professor of English at State University, if I am oppressed, then we need another word to describe a woman in a refugee camp or the mother of six in a rural village in Nicaragua or any counterpart inside South Africa (p. 14).

A radical interpretation of positionality and identity recognises the agency of the subject (researcher and researched) and the multiple and changing nature of gender (GICER). In her exploration of these issues, Alcoff (1989: 324) points out that we actively choose our identities, and that this choice-making is a political act:

> .... The identity of a woman is the product of her own interpretation and reconstruction of her history, as mediated through the cultural discursive context to which she has access.
>
> Transformative adult educators can actively use their location for the construction of meaning and position themselves elsewhere. Location is not just a place where meaning is derived.

Experience cannot be taken for granted, or essentialised, because our perceptions and interpretations of experience are problematic. Instead, we need to theorise our experience, and question/deconstruct our interpretation of personal and collective experiences. In doing so, we produce analytic categories and strategic decisions with real material effects.

However, I think that we must also recognise the limits which are rooted in 'real' structures of power and exploitation, and cannot be 'wished' away by discursive analysis alone. Somehow we must grapple with agency and the limitations of circumstances.

Jordan points out how painful a process it may be to 'tell the truth': 'To put yourself in the world is to tell the truth. Nobody else can tell your truth and if you don't do that nobody else will'. By telling the truth, you 'give birth to yourself in the world'. The process is 'never finished because none of us are ever finished'.

An active view of positionality has been presented in this section. In my conclusion, I highlight priorities for future strategies in transformative adult education, which includes a critical Third World feminist dimension.

STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

Adult educators need to develop more self-consciousness and reflexivity about all aspects of theory and practice, and subject their actions and ideas to constant criticism. New procedures of accountability can be created which enable our constituencies to provide us with 'informed critique', including participants in the research process. The accountability procedures should

incorporate all members of an oppressed constituency as fully as possible, and not be restricted to a given organisation.

From the point of view of working women and men, I think a lot more research is needed which 'studies up', and communicates the results to the 'people below'. Understanding how concrete, specific, decisions and policies are actually made, by whom, is necessary information for a people wishing to take control of their lives. Helping working women to insert their own claims on the state and on organisations in civil society, and resist policies detrimental to their interests, is part of what empowerment is all about. To do so, they need tools of discursive analysis to decode the state, media, and popular culture.

As middle class researchers, studying up will often mean studying ourselves. Inconsistencies, ambivalences, conflicts and contradictions will increase and become more evident as imperial and class exploitation intensify in Africa. The stakes involved in monopolising channels of communication and controlling resources will increase. The 'petty commoditisation' of intellectual work has forced adult educators to 'hustle' for a living. Circumstances like ours nourish 'small thoughts' and 'mean' spirits. We need to consciously develop a different life style and mode of thought and action.

Another priority, therefore, is to develop and strengthen already-existing support groups and networks which provide space for transformative adult educators, including critical Tthird World feminists, to survive and work. Part of the space can and ought to be shared with working women and men, to develop skills and knowledge for doing critical research/writing on their own behalf. Partial self-financing will help ease the dependency on donor agencies, and increase our power of negotiation.

Transformative adult educators can adopt critical third world feminism as an integral aspect of transformative adult education. Transformative educators are, by definition, also critical feminists, if they seek to abolish the underlying power relations which support imperialism, class exploitation, and gender and race-ethnic oppression.

Finally, adult educators need to focus on practical action based on their own critical analysis of adult education and the reality in which it is situated.[12] My priorities for action are pesented below, and reflect the Tanzanian context in which I live and work.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1.1 Education and training in transformative political economy and critical Third World feminism is a top priority, at all levels (including formal and informal adult education). Being practical, the first step would be the training of adult educators and teacher training colleges and universities, to 're-educate the educators' (Dirasse, 1990; Namuddu, 1990).

1.2 Strengthen the vision of 'life-long education' and put it into practice, by creating mobile short courses and seminars and taking them to working people. Educationists can run one-day workshops and weekend camps on different topics.

1.3 Support for transformative adult education and critical gender studies at the undergraduate and post-graduate (MA and PhD) level needs to be created and reinforced, within

already existing departments and faculties, and by establishing separate institutes and departments.

1.4 Promote the popularisation of education and 'science' (including social science) at all levels, partly by universalising primary, secondary and higher education. Community colleges can be created in one 'classroom'; schools and colleges can start running evening and Saturday courses for people at work. Weekend schools, week-long 'camps', mobile education units, two-month courses during long holidays — the possibilities are endless.

2.1 Research methodology courses should include the explicit study of epistemological issues.

2.2 Research methodology courses should concentrate on both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis (Namuddu, 1990).

2.3 We need to support and promote transformative research, including both basic and activist research.

3. Different kinds of communication formats can be used, to reach as many as possible, as quickly as possible. The mainstream public media is useful but limited because of state control and (self-)censorship. Alternative media include 'small alternative presses' and magazines, popular theatre, radio stations and newsletters based at grassroots level.

4.1 Educators and theorists need to develop skills of textbook writing and produce readable and enjoyable texts about adult education and other issues, for universities and other secondary and higher education institutions in the region.

4.2 Researchers/writers should develop their skills of popular writing, for mass media as well as alternative communications, and be prepared to use local national languages. People desperately need relevant and attractive reading material. The format could represent multiple voices in society and the community, and express the differences, ambivalences, conflicts and contradictions, so as to decentre mainstream views of a unitary stable 'woman' and 'man'.[13]

4.3 In conjunction with (2.3), we need to write and publish basic textbooks and manuals on research methodology, for different levels, including grassroots (see Hope and Timmel, 1984; Taylor and Stewart, 1991).

4.4 Experienced adult educators/researchers/writers need support by acknowledging their contributions, and assisting them to develop 'apprenticeship' and mentoring systems with 'juniors'.

5.1 Transformative educators need to create, strengthen and support women's and gender groups of all kinds. We can develop procedures for supportive criticism/self-criticism/counter-criticism, and nurture a critical self-consciousness about our 'selves', our multiple identities and our work. We also need to increase solidarity and support for one another through networking,

and reduce back-biting and petty competition, if we are to successfully combat the present backlash against feminism and other progressive movements (Imam and Mama, 1988: 3).

5.2 Transformative adult educators and groups can develop more viable forms of self-financing, including commercial publishing, education programmes charging nominal fees, T-shirts, cultural shows, consultancy projects which are compatible with the political positions of a group, provision of other services (like workshop organisation).

6.1 In our present near-obsession with differences, we need to shift focus from intra-class differences to inter-class conflicts and contradictions which cut across imperial, gender and race-ethnic locations. Given the monopoly which the global imperial state has on popular discourse, we can structure a new, oppositional discourse based on a critical analysis of the experiences and struggles of working women and men.

6.2 Self-reflexivity can be encouraged among adult educators, in order to increase their awareness of gender/class/race-ethnic/imperial differences, and enable them to adopt a more active positionality. We can take advantage of our middle class locations to study 'how the system works', 'how rulers rule', and 'study up', and communicate what we learn to our local, grassroots constituency, as well nationally and globally.

6.3 We need to contest pressure to concentrate solely on differences rather than engage in joint action around specific issues (Jordan, 1987). We can develop the coalitions necessary for survival and effective action, within and towards the state as well as in 'civil society'. The coalition groups which have emerged in the struggle against AIDS and in support for AIDS patients and their carers provide one example.

International research teams could be set up to jointly investigate the construction of imperial policies in both the north and the south. Studies of global state systems and big business can be linked to international action programmes, like the farmer-farmer alliances set up by small growers in the USA and EEC.

6.4 We need to develop new kinds of democratic organisational principles, in conjunction with (4.3) and (5.1) above, which sustain apprenticeship, mentoring, support and criticism, without reproducing new forms of hierarchy, authoritarianism and terrorism.

6.5 Gender groups and others need to develop more support among sympathetic men, incorporate them into gender studies, and encourage more research about 'men'.

7.1 Recognising victories in transformative analysis/action/education, is a necessary component of empowerment. Acknowledging the contributions of those who preceded us, we recognise that change is possible, through hard work and organised collective struggle.

We need to fight back against the present revisionism in modern history, worldwide, which teaches Americans, for example, that 'the 1960s' struggles for racial integration, civil rights and social justice never happened or were wrong; tells Africans that the struggles to decolonise our societies in the 1960s and 1970s were wasted.

7.2 Related to (7.1), adult educators need to take positions in the current debates on democracy, structural adjustment, and 'the environment', and become activists within the spaces we inhabit. Our perspective matters, it is different, it might save Africa and the world (Sen with Grown, 1987).

Talking about democracy without talking about democracy in the household, women's rights and children's rights, makes a mockery of the present debate (McFadden, 1992; Meena, 1991b). It won't be enough to sit back and be critical. We need to insert ourselves into the political arena, within the government and the opposition, and in the organisations mushrooming in civil society. The everyday mechanisms of power within state systems and in civil society can be highlighted, including everyday language and discourse, and class/gender/age relations in family and household and community (Eisenstein, 1988: 16). One reason anti-colonial and socialist struggles for democracy and justice did not succeed, is the failure to grapple with the way power is dispersed in many different 'informal' centres and locations, and internalised at the psychological level, not only centralised in state and corporate institutions.

8. Elson (1991: 20) has distinguished between two tactics for advancing gender and women's issues. In the short-term, activists (including scholars, WID practitioners and members of women's groups) can show how gender-sensitive analysis and action will help achieve goals 'on an agenda that has already been set' in official and unofficial circles by people without a particular concern for the advancement of women. Showing agriculturalists and development planners how gender sensitivity can lead to higher agricultural output is one example.

The more difficult but long-lasting and transformative approach is to *change the development agenda*, to broaden the objectives, to introduce different values, and to give women much more of a role in setting the agenda in the first place. ... It requires a mixture of critical argument to challenge established ways of thinking; creative proposals for alternatives; and political mobilisation to change decision-making structures. Here, scholars and activists, working with NGOs, have a vital role to play.

Antrobus (1991: 7) discusses the need for scholars, activists and WID practitioners to link their efforts 'within' and 'outside' the system. As Krawczyk (1991) noted, we need to negotiate within the state, while expanding space for organisation outside the state. The goal becomes one of undermining authoritarian practices and structures at all levels while developing alternative forms of governance, *'real' direct democracy* instead of the present representative models.

9. We need models for change and *utopian visions for the future*, which energise women and men in different locations and encourage action. They incorporate short-term objectives that are realisable without much ado, and inspire people for 'the long haul'necessary to reach long-term strategic objectives. [14]

NOTES

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2 This section is taken from 'Social Mobilisation for Child Survival and Development: Overview' edited by Marjorie Mbilinyi (UNICEF, Dar-es-Salaam, 1992: p. 3).

3 This section is drawn from John Friedmann, 'Collective Self-Empowerment and Social Change' *ifda dossier* 69 (1989:3-14). See also Marjorie Mbilinyi, *'Crisis of Education and Research in the 1980s – Challenges for the Future'* in Gaontatlhe Mautle and Frank Youngman eds *Educational Research in the SADCC Region: Present and Future* (Gaborone, Botswana Educational Research Association, 1990).

4 Unfortunately space does not allow a detailed discussion here about the issue of historical material conditions and progressive research/writing. See Imam and Mama, 1988; Mbilinyi et. al., 1982, 1984c; Kassam and Mustafa, 1982; CODESRIA, 1991; Mautle and Youngman, 1990.

5 See Mlama, 1991; Kassam and Mustafa, 1982; *African Participatory Research Journal*, Mustafa, 1982; Vuorela, 1987. Ramphele (1990) provides a cogent analysis of the contradictions which occur in participatory research processes.

6 For critiques of WID in Africa, see Mascarenhas and Mbilinyi, 1983; Mbilinyi, 1984a; Meena, 1984.

7 These issues were raised at the 1991 CODESRIA and 1991 and 1992 SAPES workshops on gender.

8 Similar developments in the American civil rights movement in the late '50s and early '60s, involving white tendencies to dominate a black movement, led SNCC and other organisations to insist on separate, identity politics (i.e. black only membership; white support from outside).

9 See Wangoola and Youngman.

10 There were kings, queens, commoners, and slaves for centuries in pre-colonial Africa; simple and more complex societies, including empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms; many societies were multi-cultural and multi-ethnic. The Omani Zanzibar Empire stretched southwards from Kenya to the southern tip of Mozambique in the 1800s.

11 See especially the collections edited by Harding, 1987; Malson et. al., 1989; Hull et. al., 1982; Smith, 1983; de Lauretis, 1986; Nicholson, 1990; and the work of Jordan, 1987; Mohanty, 1987, 1988; Minh-ha, 1989; Fuss, 1989.

12 See Wangoola and Youngman; CODESRIA, 1991; Mbilinyi, 1984c; Dirasse, 1990; Mbughuni and Mbilinyi eds, 1991. Many of the ideas in this section are derived from my ongoing participatory research activities.

13 Authors who present multiple and conflicting voices include Lugones and Spelman 1983, Kalindile et. al., 1991; Mbilinyi, Kalindile and Sambulika, 1989.

14 Here I'd like to repeat part of Edelman's (1988) 'agenda for empowerment' list, which focuses especially on children and youth — our future and priority, in adult education as any other sector.

(Marion Wright Edelman is founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund in Washington DC, USA. The CDF is a research and activist organisation which lobbies on behalf of all poor and disadvantaged children. I am grateful to Pat Made for sharing this article with me. The similarities in concerns and conditions of African-American people in the USA and the indigenous peoples of Africa reflect common histories and the globalisation process of advanced capitalism.)

1) Remember to teach children that Black folks have never been able to take anything for granted ... Tell our children that they're not going to jive their way up the career ladder. They have got to work their way up — hard and continuously. ... And tell them to take the initiative in creating their own opportunity.

2) Teach our children the importance of getting a good education ... a precondition to survival ... a liberal education and learn how to think so that they can navigate in an ever-changing job market.

3) When the next recession arrives — and it will — Black unemployment rates will soar. ... *How, then, do we work toward a full share in the power to set the goals in place, and not just the right to run the race?*

4) Set goals and work quietly and systematically toward them. So often we feel we have to talk loudly rather than act effectively. ... You can get a mighty lot done in this world if you don't mind doing the work and letting other people take the credit.

5) Know the difference between substance and style. ... Get your insides in order and your direction clear first, and then worry about your clothes and your wheels.

6) Value family life. We must *do* things with our children. Listen to them. Be moral examples for them.

7) Vote and use our political and economic power. ... Don't even pretend that you care about the Black community, about poor children, about your nation, even about your own future, if you don't exercise the political leverage Medgar Evers and others died for to make sure we had. And run for political office. And when you win don't forget that you are the means to serve others well and not the end.

8) Remember your roots, your history and the forebears' shoulders on which you stand. ... Young people who do not know where they come from and the struggle it took to get them where they are now, will not know where they are going or what to do for anyone besides

themselves, if and when they finally arrive somewhere. And if they run into bad weather on the way, they will not have the protective clothing to withstand the wind and the rain ...

9) Keep dreaming and aiming high. ... (quoting Dr. Benjamin Mays) ... '... the tragedy of life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It is not a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled, but it is a calamity not to dream ...'

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ADULT EDUCATION POLICY

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CONTINUITY NOT RUPTURE: AN ANALYSIS OF ADULT EDUCATION POLICY PROPOSALS EMANATING FROM THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY INVESTIGATION (NEPI)

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The poor do not divide their lives into the purely economic or social or credit. The overall design should be capable of responding to the basic needs of the poor in an inter-related fashion (Wignaraja, 1990)

INTRODUCTION

In this paper I will identify key assumptions imbedded within the four NEPI reports which are most directly related to the field of adult education. The term 'adult education' is used here in an inclusive way to refer to all educational provision for adults excluding formal tertiary training. The NEPI reports which cover this are ADULT EDUCATION, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION and HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, plus the FRAMEWORK REPORT. I will argue that both from the standpoints of the professional adult educator and the adult learners, the reports have not moved the field of adult education significantly out of its fragmented, chaotic institutional and conceptual state. If anything they may tend to entrench the fragmentation. The investigation for the most part operated within the historical divisions of the field. In doing this it may well have unwittingly reinforced certain structural inequities based on race, gender, class and geography.

The failure of the reports to move the conception of the field beyond the present, is best demonstrated in the FRAMEWORK REPORT, where the authors state their view of adult education. This is worth quoting in full:

While some would define AE broadly to include ABE, skills-training and parts of post-secondary education, others consider it as a sector in a more restricted sense, namely as the sector which :

- Caters for the greatest degree of diversity and initiative;
- Lays least emphasis on formal skills and qualifications;
- Articulates least with the formal system;
- Is oriented more explicitly towards citizenship and social enrichment than towards productive skills; and
- Is therefore rather less concerned with development and redress, than with democracy.

Many of the options for this sector will be constrained by choices made at other points in the education system.

AE is traditionally served by a large and loosely connected NGO sector. Most of its finance comes from private sources. There may be valid reasons to co-ordinate it more, by means of a National Council for AE and regional adult education councils. Practitioners often argue for greater decentralisation to facilitate the diversity of the sector. This should not be interpreted to mean that this sector is unimportant; but under the circumstances it is likely to remain the least articulated, and most decentralised and most diverse sector.

Its relation to the state, therefore, is likely to be more attenuated than any other sector, and it will impact more on the quality of life than on equity, the formal system, or formal employment chances (NEPI Framework: 36).

The authors, in three paragraphs, commit adult education to ongoing obscurity. They believe it requires neither state support nor much institutional shaping. It is concerned with 'democracy' and 'improving the quality of life', not with 'development and redress'. (In the documents 'development' is used in a very particular way to refer to economic development primarily in the formal labour market). From the point of view of the majority of people who are outside the formal labour market and are poor, adult education which could improve their quality of life would, I assume, be welcomed. But there is silence on what this consists of and who is to pay for it. This policy proposal for adult education in South Africa succeeds in sidelining adult education as a worthwhile educational enterprise and sidelining the adult educational needs of many people who are outside formal educational systems and employment.

If we agree with Clive Millar (1991: 9) that our task as professional adult educators is 'to secure a wider state commitment to adult education than isolated forms of practice', then we need to acknowledge that with this kind of proposal emanating from individuals within the 'democratic movement', to date, we have failed.

Why has the NEPI project failed to move adult education 'beyond the fragments'? What are the conceptual and practical implications for the field of adult education as defined in the NEPI reports?

THE NEPI PROJECT AND THE DELINEATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SECTORS

The unbanning of political organisations in February 1990, made certain intellectuals in the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC), particularly from the Education Policy Units, realise that imminent negotiations were going to demand more detailed policy positions than previously advanced. In February 1991 the NEPI project was approved, with a submission date for 20 months' later (NEPI PSE: 124). During this period the NEPI brief was to produce an analysis of education policy. The first step was to delineate the areas, and the second was to create research groups for each area. Convenors of the research groups were appointed by the National Executive Committee of the NECC apparently 'after much horse trading'. An office was set up in Johannesburg. The majority of work was done for NEPI on a voluntary basis (NEPI Framework: 2; see also Muller, 1992).

The 12 research groups which were established were adult education, adult basic education, curriculum, early childhood educare, education planning, systems and structure, governance and administration, human resource development, language, library and information services, post-secondary education, support services (incorporating guidance and counselling, special education, and health), and teacher education. The authors state that 'these were admittedly arbitrary divisions, which allowed us to emphasize certain features of education and not others'. On reflection, the only problem they noted was that 'a specific emphasis on primary education is a distinct gap' (ibid).

Delineation of fields is done for many purposes: claiming ownership of territory, disclaiming ownership of territory, advancing the interests of particular groups of people, planning allocation of responsibility and so on. Through the process of delineation, boundaries are drawn which help to establish a field's professional identity and its significance for individuals and society at large (Griffin 1987 :136). Therefore the process of delineation is very much a political act over which we can anticipate vigorous contestation. It is thus suprising that in the NEPI publications there is no explanation of how or why delineation of the field of education was done the way it was. It is hardly adequate for the authors to deal with the issue by saying 'these were admittedly arbitrary divisions'. It is an area of the NEPI project which requires much more probing and research to reconstruct what happened and why? Whose interests where best served through the delineation as constructed?

The field of adult education was divided between adult basic education, human resource development and adult education. When I asked one of the members of the executive committee why this had happened, he said that initially they had seen ABE and AE as one sector, but the split was being promoted by a strong COSATU-linked lobby within the ABE field and this prevailed. The executive committee had felt that HRD should be separate from ABE and AE. At the only meeting called of all three research groups in early 1991, the members of the adult education and ABE voiced their opposition to the divisions and proceeded to have a joint meeting. The HRD met separately. A recommendation from that meeting was that at least the AE and ABE groups should constitute one group. This recommendation was not accepted and no explanation was ever given to participants of the groups. The three groups developed separately from then on, with very limited interaction among them. Each group had a very different process which was informed very much by the convenors and participants. The adult education group barely operated as a group. There was minimal consultation and input from members, with the convenor writing the report on his own. The ABE group had four convenors and three writers, and they held various workshops and meetings in the course of their work. The HRD group had one convenor, three writers, and several paid researchers. They operated in a more traditional academic way.

It is not the purpose of this paper to try to write a contemporary history of the decision-making processes within NEPI and the operations of the different research groups. Clearly this would be extremely difficult at this stage, with participants having their own interpretations and very recent memories of events. It is also not the purpose to critique individuals or groups who were operating under various constraints in what was a complex, and, in many ways, a commendable project. However, it is relevant for this paper to note the silences in the NEPI publications about the highly political and formative stage of delineation.

In the rest of the paper, I will argue that the way that adult education was parcelled out has had serious consequences for the advancement of the conceptual and practical policy proposals for the field. It could also have serious consequences in the longer term, if the delineations are accepted by future policy makers and present and future funders, for the delivery of adult education services which do try to address the needs of the majority of marginalised, poor, women and men, in urban and rural areas.

WHAT DO THE NEPI REPORTS SAY?

In this section I will briefly sketch the pertinent arguments within the three reports. These reports are themselves a distillation of many other papers and documents, therefore sketches I present will not be able to do full justice to the complexity of the arguments.

Adult Education

The adult education research group was in a very difficult position from the start. They were asked to develop policy options for adult education which was defined to exclude adult basic education and workplace education and training (HRD). If we accept for the moment a classification of the social purposes of adult education, which includes compensatory education, upgrading of work-related knowledge and skills, and cultural and political non-formal education, then the definition of adult education to be used was restricted only to include the latter. The participants in the group refused to accept this definition and proceeded to define adult education in an inclusive way.

The report makes a bid for 'adult education' to be the main frame within which policy should be developed. It uses the UNESCO definition and then claims a particular ethos or set of value positions for AE. It argues that AE should be recognised as the overarching term to describe education provision outside the conventional formal system of initial education, including vocational education and training, human resource development, and literacy and basic education.

It is interesting that the report does not explicitly take issue with the delineation of adult education, as handed down by the NEPI leadership, or reflect on the process of decision-making which resulted in its restricted terms of reference. It also does not engage in the debates around delineation among adult educators themselves, for example, as to whether the 'economy' is included or excluded from the definitions of adult education. The tone of the report is much more that of advocacy than argument.

There is an assumption in the text that there is consensus among adult educators across countries, social class origins, political affiliations, and sectors, around certain core beliefs and values. These beliefs include 'adults have as much right to education as children' and that 'all adults should have access to the means of learning the things they need in order to function in society'. This claim is reinforced with a discussion of AE which stresses equality, human dignity, liberal and radical political values, emancipation and critical thought. There is slippage between a claim for AE to be the main frame for considering policy options covering all aspects of adult education, as in the UNESCO definition, and advocacy for 'social movement' AE which has a more egalitarian tradition.

The report addresses the question 'What is adult education?' and, quite rightly, argues that AE policy decisions need to be built on a foundation of conceptual clarity regarding what is meant by 'adult education'. There is a discussion of terms including community education, non-formal education, continuing education and life-long education. Of these terms, the only one that is situated, to some degree, historically is NFE. The discussion does not reflect the ongoing contestation over terms as different interest groups at different times and in different places argue for the supremacy of 'their' term (as was happening in NEPI). This contestation is not acknowledged and the discussion is not contextualised. This limits its value, as does the fact that no argument is presented for the most appropriate terms to be used in South Africa today. It is only in the last few pages that an argument is developed for using 'adult and continuing education' which 'combines both an emancipatory social and egalitarian vision of the learning society and a continuing education ethos that aids development and productivity'. It is also only at this late stage that the author differentiates between 'radical adult education' and 'adult education'. At different times, terms are used interchangeably, and this leads to greater confusion rather than clarity.

The third chapter describes present adult education provision and this is the heart of the text. Interesting information is given on issues of governance, finance, certification, state provision, corporate sector provision, universities and NGO provision. The discussion of the state provision demonstrates a far wider occurence of adult education than even the report acknowledges. There is speculation that the state could be spending at least R250 million a year on adult education activities which are not defined as such in the various state departments' budgets. Officially, the state does not refer to AE. In the recently released 'Educational Renewal Strategy' document of the government, it was only NFE that was mentioned and by this they meant, mainly, vocational training.

Emerging policy alternatives are discussed in the report. The basic divisions among the various parties revolve mainly around AE's priority status, with those on the left of the political spectrum, i.e. the ANC and COSATU, arguing for it in terms of ABE and HRD policies. Differences around the form of governance of AE and who should pay for it are reflected in the differences between the right and left, with the left arguing for substantial state involvement. Across the political spectrum there appears to be remarkable agreement on the need for a better system of certification and accreditation, and for links between formal and NFE. Distance education is regarded as useful, and a number of groups are interested in the idea of community colleges.

In this summary of the various proposals, the differences among people broadly on the left are not elaborated. Some of the differences are graphically illustrated in the NEPI project itself and in the way the different factions contested the delineation of the sectors. For example, the COSATU-linked participants were apparently arguing for ABE to be separate from AE and to be closer to HRD. The report does not confront the differences and their implications for the different policy options. The report does state that it was difficult to get to the details of the different positions, as in some instances these have not been fully developed. So it has meant working from policy statements which are extremely generalised and at the level of principle rather than strategic planning. Few of the parties have developed the cost implications of their plans, particularly COSATU which is arguing for major state investment.

The final chapter focuses on policy options for the future. The author argues that AE needs to be considered important as it is an integral part of being able to achieve the NEPI principles which are non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, a unitary system and redress. Options relating to conceptions of AE are given, and an argument is developed for a conception of adult and continuing education which combines both an emancipatory social and egalitarian vision of the learning society, and a continuing education ethos that aids development and productivity. Options relating to the governance of AE are also given, with an argument developed for a mixed system with extensive collaboration between state and civil society. The proposal is made, as an interim measure, to have a national council for AE which could create a forum for policy making, with regional councils. The state could play a facilitative role in creating an enabling environment for the participation of learners, for example, through giving tax incentives, open access to institutions and so on. There may be need of an Adult Education Act.

In summary, the NEPI Adult Education report makes a bid for the use of the term adult education as the main frame of the debate. This does not succeed in terms of the NEPI project nor in its own terms. Perhaps it could not succeed in terms of the NEPI project because NEPI leadership had adopted the distinctions at the outset, and when it came to summarising their positions in the Framework report, they were caught within the existing distinctions and the logic of these ensured a minimalist conception of adult education. However, it may have assisted the argument for an inclusive conception of AE if the contestation over the delineation was more explicit in the text. The text itself combines information-giving, argument and advocacy to some degree, but errs more strongly on the latter. It would seem that because of the terms of reference and the fact that the research group found itself 'painted into a corner', advocacy of an inclusive conception was more strongly developed rather than argument. By not putting forward the legitimate arguments for different conceptions, the power of the arguments has perhaps been weakened. Greater conceptual clarity of the meaning of 'adult education' was also not achieved through slippage between advocacy for a particular view of adult education and the claim to include all adult education whether it be in a military establishment or a civic association. Rather than analysing different policy options, this report is inclined to propose and advocate one policy option.

Adult Basic Education

The research group on ABE was working in a context where there is increasing recognition of the importance of adult literacy provision for a third of the adult population who do not have effective reading and writing skills, and do not have a basic school education. On the one hand, there is the political argument that a society that is striving for democratic participation of all its citizens has to address the fact that many cannot participate in literate communications. On the other hand, the economic argument is put that with the changing economic world order since the 1980s, nations with high levels of general education among the workforce have had the advantage over nations where the general educational levels of the workforce was low. Adult literacy and basic education programmes have therefore acquired greater economic importance. The state, employers and trades unions share some agreement that widespread provision of basic education is a crucial feature of any sustainable strategy for economic renewal. Success in addressing this problem is said to be critical to the economic well-being of the society (ABE: 2). There is therefore a new, more receptive ABE policy environment.

The meaning given to literacy takes into account the view that it is not useful to think of literacy outside its social context, and that the notion of multiple literacies which may co-exist for the performance of widely varying personal, social and economic functions is important. Literacy learning is most usefully placed in the context of basic education for adults. Therefore the research group argues the need to develop an understanding of what constitutes a general basic education for adults. This necessitates thinking about different levels of provision of basic education, not merely literacy.

With this broader notion of adult literacy and basic education, a question about delineation between the adult education and ABE sectors becomes apparent. If ABE is motivated to serve the political ends of a democratic citizenry, and economic needs of the individual and society located within the specific social conditions of the learners, what distiguishes AE and ABE? ABE within this definition is concerned with all three social purposes of AE mentioned earlier, i.e. compensation, upgrading of work-related skills and political- and culture-related education. What is the useful purpose of their separation?

As in the AE report, it is interesting to note that the ABE report is silent on the seemingly irrational division between AE and ABE, and it does not argue explicitly that ABE should be located within a broader policy and system of AE. It argues rather for an ABE system. It does, however, suggest that non-formal post-literacy provision is the domain of the AE research group although the articulation between the literacy and post-literacy, and therefore the AE and ABE, is not developed (ABE : 23). Does this assume that ABE covers all aspects of adult education until a school equivalent level of standard five or seven? Is it arguing for an inclusive conception of ABE so that it becomes the main frame for policy development and provision in the field of AE? It would seem that within the Framework report there is acceptance of a more inclusive understanding of ABE.

The ABE report goes on to give an overview of the scope of illiteracy and literacy provision in South Africa. It presents an interesting description of international perspectives and then comes to emerging policy directions of the major actors in the country. These are the state, industry, NGOs, COSATU, and the ANC.

As stated above, the state in its latest ERS document takes up a familiar position that a certificated, non-formal system should be linked with formal education. In relation to literacy per se, it believes the primary actors should be employer groups and NGOs. From the perspective of the ERS, illiteracy remains a marginal problem located at the edge of the larger and more significant problems facing the system of formal and non-formal education and training. The priority is universal primary education.

Among the employers, the report notes varying attitudes to ABE. The National Training Board/HSRC Investigation into a National Training Strategy for South Africa 1991 (NTS), represents thinking of the 10 employer associations represented on it. The report states that high illiteracy and semi-literacy levels constitute a major obstacle with regard to the development strategies to strengthen the economy. However, the NTS does not contain any recommendations for the large-scale planning, organisation and implementation of ABE programmes. The commitment to the eradication of illiteracy is therefore seen as questionable. By implication, the NTS is similar to the state's view that suggests that the universalisation of primary education is a better way of reducing illiteracy than the extension of ABE.

Other employers are identified who share the democratic movement's concerns about the inadequate nature of the present provision of ABE, and have expressed support for the need for a national system of ABE which would articulate with the training and formal education systems. These employers recognise the need to develop strategies of scale and would possibly support some form of national negotiations about ABE. However, as the report points out, even among these employers there are likely to be major points of difference with the unions regarding the nature of the curricula, the role of the state, the role of the employers in the provision of resources, the right to paid educational leave, and so on. This view is reflected in the NTS, with its narrow conception of the needs of the labour market rather than emphasising generic skills and knowledge needed for political, social and economic reconstruction (ABE: 56).

Among the NGO literacy projects, there has had to be a major rethinking of their roles and their work as the small-scale work that they have been engaged in is challenged and they are forced to respond to issues of large-scale provision. While progressive literacy NGOs have been central in thinking about innovative approaches to literacy work in South Africa over the last 30 years, others such as COSATU and the employers are making the bidding now. NGOs are arguing for their ongoing involvement at levels of policy and provision. There does seem to be fairly widespread acceptance of NGOs' abilities to deliver more responsive services at very local levels and in creative ways.

Possibly the single most significant change in the ABE policy environment, since 1990, has been the formulation of a position by organised labour. COSATU has developed a number of documents dealing with its proposal for an integrated, modularised, competency-based education and training system. ABE forms a vital part of the total system. The objective of the system is 'the development of skills and knowledge needed to help shape and develop economic policies, run industries, build a democratic society and stengthen job creation projects' (ABE: 58).

The key elements of the proposal are that it should be a national system of education and training, with ABE at its base, providing modularised, certificated courses which are integrated across formal schooling, adult secondary education and industrial training. The central point is that the system should permit access at all levels, and the continuous accumulation of exchangeable certificates. It is COSATU policy that employers and the state provide facilities for classes, and must assist in paying for teachers and the costs of developing materials. It sees ABE courses as needing to provide a general basic education that will equip people with the knowledge and skills for governance. The courses must enable learners to link up with other educational and training opportunities, and job-creation projects, and must have clear national standards. They also propose a nationally recognised system of training and paying adult basic education educators.

Like COSATU, the ANC is also committed to a coherent and integrated system for adult education and ABE which has a national system of standards and certificates to enable mobility between the formal and non-formal education and training system. However, the ANC has not yet developed practical suggestions on how its emergent policies are to be mounted.

In the final section of the report, major potential policy options are discussed. The first option is an integrated education and training system with the provision of ABE as part of a

national development policy aimed at the restructuring of the economy, redistribution, and political democratisation. This approach assumes a strong interventionist state in order to correct the social inequalities of apartheid. The provision of ABE would be co-ordinated within a national framework of human resources development and affirmative action. Institutional locations of ABE are given as possibly within the education department, as a separate directorate within an adult education division which is part of a human resources ministry, or ABE could be part of a separate AE department.

The second option put forward is a state-enabling structure co-ordinating a differentiated field of provision. In terms of this model, the government's commitment and tasks, as well as the rights and the obligations of other institutions, would be established within an Adult Education Act. Parastatal structures may be established to co-ordinate various aspects of ABE provision and development.

The third option presented is for a centralised 'second-chance' system. This model is substantially based on the AE provided by the state education departments at present.

In discussion of the options, the report does not advocate one position explicitly, but seems to see a combination of the options being a possibility. But, the report argues, more developmental work and research is necessary in order to have a deeper level of understanding of the field and what is needed.

In summary, ABE is used as an inclusive term to refer to adult literacy and basic education up to a Standard 6 or 7 equivalency level. There is acceptance of the argument that rather than providing literacy skills in the narrow sense, what is needed is a sound general education on which further training can be built. ABE's importance is argued in terms of its ecomomic and political importance for South Africa. The report presents a very useful overview of the current, limited provision, in this country and internationally.

In the final section, which is concerned with the policy options, the report starts with a very strong presentation of the COSATU integrated option and then goes on to others. In the end the report seems to peter out with the view that a combination of the options is most probably what is needed, but more research is required in order to develop a deeper understanding of the field. The report moves from being very confident in its assertions to being very tentative. On the whole, the report succeeds in 'tidying up' the ABE field, but it does not advance conceptual understanding of literacy and basic education. It does not address some of the difficult issues which underpin the scenario that is sketched. For example, there is abysmal ABE provision in the country and the identified needs are vast. Why is it then that many of the classes that are provided are not well attended and why has it not become an issue for mass mobilisation within civic associations, trades unions and among ordinary women and men? While accepting the notion of 'literacies', they have not problematised understandings of literacies and illiteracies which Morphet (UCT, 1992) begins to do.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The report states that it interprets HRD not in a functionalist and technocratic way, but in essence it 'is concerned with the processes whereby the citizens of a nation acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to perform both specific occupational tasks and other social, cultural,

intellectual, and political roles that are part of a vibrant, democratic society. Central to this process of skill and knowledge formation is the provision of vocational education and training (VET)'. It argues that a HRD policy must be composite and comprehensive in character – it must outline coherent and integrated policies in a range of related institutions, including economic, manpower and VET agencies, and those of civil society.

The report argues that with regard to HRD policies it is possible to locate nations at particular points on what is referred to as the 'low-skill, high-skill continuum'. At one extreme is a relatively small group of nations whose HRD strategies can be characterised as 'high-participation, high-skill'. These include Germany, France, Austria and Sweden in Europe, and the late-industrialising countries (LICs) of the Pacific Rim: South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. At the other end of the continuum are nations that are 'low-participation, low-skill', including middle-industrialising countries (MICs), such as Britain, as well as most developing countries – South Africa amongst them.

The report contends that HRD policy proposals of the ANC and COSATU are a variant of the 'high-participation, high-skill' strategy, whereas the state's proposals amount to a 'low-participation, low-skill' model (Framework: 168).

The report describes the global context as one in which the world economy is being transformed as a result of the widespread application of the new production and organisational technologies. The new production technologies, unlike those based on mass Fordist methods of production, enable the production process to become highly automated, flexible, and smaller in scale. Enterprises switching over to the new technologies require much smaller, but more highly skilled workforces. Workers in the new automated enterprises have to be able to perform a wide range of both manual and mental tasks as part of close-knit production teams. Post-Fordism has also been accompanied by increases in employment and service activities, and a decline in manufacturing employment. The impact of post-Fordism is never uniform, nor, in all cases, are its effects entirely beneficial. The impact of post-Fordism has been greatest in strategic export-oriented industries, and in these industries there has been an increase in education and training levels.

The negative side of post-Fordism is that in many cases the new technologies have led to de-skilling of work and displacement of labour. As a consequence, there has been an informalisation of economies, with growing numbers of low-wage firms struggling for survival.

Within the South African economy there has been a crisis for the past two decades, and growth rates have declined dramatically. Faced with this massive economic crisis, there is a growing convergence of views among employer's organisations, trade unions, and the state about: the need to increase exports of manufactured goods coupled with the production of higher value-added activities, and the need to reduce dependence on primary commodity exports and promotion of inward industrialisation strategies, based on black urbanisation and basic needs provision. Nevertheless, key policy differences exist concerning the roles of the state and market forces in the process of economic restructuring. Clearly, the dual strategies of export-oriented industry restructuring and satisfying basic needs will require specific and differentiated VET policies. The former will require a high level of technological capacity, research and development expertise, and technological skill, while the latter requires a broad package of social policies aimed at meeting basic needs and development potential of the disadvantaged sectors of South African society (Framework: 169).

In the report, while there is acceptance of a very broad definition of HRD which needs to take into account all levels of VET provisions and the need for provision in multiple sites, including state, industry and civil society, the study in actual fact concentrates mainly on the needs of the formal labour market. VET at school level and within the informal economic sectors are not elaborated to any extent. While it is acknowledged that the meaning of HRD needs broad interpretation and preferably be linked to a broad-based general education, there is little discussion of how the VET policies will link to ABE and other forms of AE. The ABE proposals of COSATU are seen as very much part of the COSATU VET strategy, but in general, ABE is mentioned as it relates to the formal labour market only-not to the broader society.

The report does recognise the problems with the 'high-participation, high-skill' model of ANC/COSATU in South Africa given that the conditions for the success of this model do not exist. The model has succeeded apparently in two types of societies: highly authoritarian and late industrialising countries, including Japan, and strongly social democratic countries, such as Germany and Sweden. These are characterised by a high degree of social cohesiveness. In the ANC/COSATU model, equity concerns tend to dominate over efficiency issues. In the short term, operationalising this model could be difficult, given the opposition of employers to large increases in general skills training and higher training and wage costs (HRD: 175).

The challenge for the VET policies is to span the formal, informal and unemployed sectors of the economy. A unified system must make allowances for diversity and differences, such as in training in the informal sector. Another challenge is for it to overcome the class, racial and gender inequalities. The report argues that it is essential that the ANC/COSATU formulate equity and economic development policies directly in relation to each other. The economic development policies are required to generate finances and jobs which can assist in providing the capacity for VET programmes in the disadvantaged communities.

The discussions of HRD policy options assume the role VET can play in economic growth and development. The argument seems to reinstate a version of human capital theory which has been largely discredited among educationalists and economists on the left. Unlike human capital theory, the HRD report does contextualise education and it argues that education is a powerful agent if active labour markets work more democratically and, in the process (as in Sweden) workers have ongoing access to education. The thesis concerning the role of education in the regeneration of the economy will remain a highly contentious area of debate.

As mentioned above, there is some convergence of views between the state, the corporate sector and the ANC/COSATU alliance. This includes the need for better interface between institutions to allow adequate transferability of credits obtained in one instituion to another. Details on how this articulation will be possible have not been developed.

In summary, the HRD policy discussions are driven by considerations of the formal labour market, even though there is acknowledgement that VET policy must consider the informal and the unemployed sectors as well. The ANC/COSATU policies are strongly supported, although the challenges facing the achievement of both equity and economic development are pointed out. One of the biggest dangers of the way in which the debates have been conducted, is that policies will be centred around the interests of the formal labour market which may only be relevant for 40 – 50% of the working population. The formal labour market comprises mainly men.

The VET provision could continue to serve a small relatively elite group of mainly male workers. The way VET is being discussed is also mainly a tripartite arrangement between the state, unions and the corporate sector. This again excludes, in many instances, sectors other than the formal labour market.

NEPI AND ADULT EDUCATION POLICY INTO THE FUTURE

The delineation of the adult education sectors within the NEPI project maintained the delineation more or less as it currently stands, with industrial education and training as one distinct sector, compensatory adult education as another and community education (used here as a shorthand for cultural and political NFE) yet another. At one level, starting from the logic of the given reality of policy and provision is a legitimate way of proceeding. There are complex conceptual and practical issues within each area of adult education provision and they may best be addressed separately. At another level, by working within the current reality, it may be impossible to make the conceptual and practical leaps in order to change the present reality in any fundamental way, which the NEPI reports describe as grossly unequal, highly inefficient and ineffective in terms of economic growth, and democratic political, social and cultural reconstruction.

In each of the three reports there are arguments made for degrees of integration of the education and training systems. The adult education report advocates most strongly the need for an integrated conceptual and practical system of provision. It argues this from the point of view of both redress and economic growth. It suggests the terms 'adult' and 'continuing education' to capture these two important aspects of any new system. The ABE report starts from the premise of an inclusive notion of ABE, including a general basic education which can serve the purposes of compensatory education, work-related skills in the formal and informal sectors, and community education. The HRD report supports the COSATU/ANC proposals which argue strongly for a highly articulated system which allows recognition and mobility between institutions in formal and non-formal education. It acknowledges the need for a VET policy to cater for people in the formal labour market and in the informal sector. It argues for ABE to be seen as an integral part of VET provision.

Each of the reports in fact argues, in different ways, that the three social purposes of adult education, i.e. work-related skills upgrading, compensatory education, and cultural and political education, cannot be separated in conceptual or practical terms if the needs of the majority of the population are to be met. They recognise that the majority of the population are economically, politically and socially disadvantaged. They are disadvantaged as a result of a highly differentiated system based on class, gender and race discrimination, plus geographic location. The reports, however, do not advance the debate very far as to how, in conceptual and practical terms, a highly articulated system, which can achieve both equity and economic development, can occur. Perhaps they could not because of the way the problems were set up, and because of the particular interests and orientations of the researchers themselves. How, then, might the discussion be taken forward?

During the IEB/CACE colloquium on 'Adult Education: Policy for the Future' in 1991, after an intense debate about the meaning of adult education and the delineation of the field, a visitor from Namibia, Zach Kazapua, said, 'The most important thing is to know who the learners are,

and what methods are most appropriate for them as adults. We cannot fit an adult into one box – she is all things simultaneously.' Similarly, in much of the 'gender and development literature' it is pointed out that it is highly problematic to treat women and men as just economic or social beings. Women in particular have a multiplicity of roles. Besides being heavily involved in economic production, they take prime responsibility as home managers, child-bearers and carers of children and the elderly, plus are community organisers (Bown 1990). Productive and reproductive roles are integrated.

Another starting point, therefore, for thinking about adult education policy and provision which is going to meet the integrated economic and social needs and interests of the potential participants, is to start with their complex realities. What are the 'daily lived experiences' of the different women and men whom the policy and the provision are to assist?

An immediate argument against this approach may be that this is utopian, and that the harsh historical macro-economic and political realities are of paramount importance. I would argue in response to this that, firstly, utopian thinking is what we may need to develop a new vision of what may be possible rather than taking the present market-driven economic imperatives as the only possible engines for human development (See Hart, 1992, for an elaboration of this argument). Secondly, taking different people's realities as starting points of analysis does not rule out, and is not in opposition to, starting from other points simultaneously. I would argue that the different starting points allow for the opening up of a wide range of different perspectives – they are analytical tools which allow complex situations to be analysed more thoroughly, taking different interests and points of view into account.

In order to develop this point further and test its merits, we can take one case study. We can ask what the social, economic and educational needs may be of a twenty-nine year-old woman, living in Khayelitsha, who is the mother of three children, who is the head of the household, and who has a standard five school education? What is her daily lived experience, and in what way can an adult education system alleviate some of the hardship of her position?

In all probability, she will be concerned with the physical, emotional, and spiritual survival of herself and her family. She will be eking out an existence under harsh conditions, with the physical safety of herself and her family a major source of anxiety and concern. Her time will be extremely scarce as she juggles the various demands being made on her. If she is to participate in any activity over and above that which is already structured into her daily existence, it will have to be of a very particular kind which fits her reality. Even then, she will need to be highly motivated to juggle yet another activity into her life. It will need to serve her primary economic, social and spiritual survival concerns.

With the profile of this woman as a point of reference, what are the conceptual and practical issues that the debate about adult education policy and provision should take into account? Some of the most obvious practical points concern the need for:

- A problematising of the role of education and training in meeting her practical needs and strategic interests;
- An integrated conceptual understanding of her education and training needs;
- An integrated system of provision;
- A local venue which is easily accessible, and takes into account her physical vulnerability in getting to and from the place;

- Minimal financial costs; and
- Curricula and methods of delivery which relate to her daily realities and need for economic survival.

At present, within many of the policy options that are being presented, it does not appear that the daily lived realities of the majority of the potential beneficiaries of a system have been starting points for the discussions. If they were, perhaps the debates would have been shaped differently. For example, if it is accepted that any system developed will need to integrate compensatory, work-related skills training and community educational needs, that it must be provided at low cost, and be situated in neighbourhoods, then the coceptualisation of the system begins at a very different point. Immediately the schools and other local facilities become key potential sites of provision. Debates about new institutions such as 'adult learning centres' or 'community colleges' become important. In essence, the problems confronting the development of an integrated adult education system are generated from below.

Some of the key issues that obviously do confront the development of an integrated system, and which have been mentioned in the reports to varying degrees, may be explored both from the macro historical, socio-economic and political perspectives, and from the 'daily lived experiences' of the potential beneficiaries at the micro level. These include:

- Certification and accreditation of courses;
- Funding mechanisms;
- Governance;
- Training of the adult educators; and
- Articulation and mobility between institutions.

Besides using different 'daily lived experiences' of a range of women and men who may work in the formal or informal sectors, in rural or urban areas, and so on, as a way of opening up possibilities for envisioning an alternative system of adult education policy and provision, it is also a useful method for evaluating any policy options that are developed. It would be interesting to explore the ways the various policy options developed in the NEPI reports may or may not address the situation of the woman mentioned above?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I have argued that the way that the NEPI project delineated the field of adult education reflected the way policy and provision has been delineated in South Africa to date. It was an act of continuity rather than rupture. This delineation has unwittingly limited the scope for conceptual and practical policy development. It has perpetuated a fragmented way of addressing the education and training needs of the majority of women and men. In each of the reports, but particularly the ABE and HRD reports, the COSATU proposals dominated thinking. These proposals are obviously extremely important and innovative in many ways, but they are inevitably driven by the requirements and the logic of the formal labour market with its urban, male, production orientation. While the limitations of this are acknowledged, and

there are suggestions for trying to counter this bias (see Bird, 1992), the proposals are unable to break out of this dominant frame.

In this paper I argue that if policy options are to be developed which are to counter this extremely powerful logic successfully, other starting points for analysis must be generated. I have suggested that one method could be based on the 'daily lived experiences' of the different women and men whom the new system is to benefit. New, integrated conceptions of adult education could be built by working with both macro and micro perspectives simultaneously. The continuation of fragmented conceptions of adult education will mean the continuation of fragmented provision, which will, in all likelihood, mean the continuation of male, urban, and formal labour market-orientated policy and provision. The 'new' system will be about continuity and not rupture.

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INSERTING FEMINISM INTO ADULT EDUCATION

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...Although no-one doubts that the destruction of apartheid is an essential component of meaningful change, it has become more difficult to assert with confidence that socialist, or even freedom from white capitalist domination, will automatically bring equality for women (Berger, 1992:300)

As is well known, some Adult Education (AE)[1] measures in South Africa took new directions in the late 1970s, following the student uprisings and worker resistance to repressive state measures. People who moved into AE, as Aitcheson (1991: 410) said at a conference of University-based Adult Educators in 1987, in the '70s and '80s

> ... did believe that they were going to train 'leaders' and 'managers' of an alternative education movement/system that would have high impact on adult masses.

It was part of a social movement, concentrating on African, Indian and Coloured communities. The movement was concerned with opposition to the state in general, thus not necessarily directly related to class or gender factors.[2]

AE as a social movement by no means represents the full range of provision. Apart from a number of women's and religious organisations (the latter plays a highly important part particularly among black women, yet little is known of this) which provide varying forms of AE for their members, the state also supports AE through night schools for blacks and vocational education, which is supposed to be available to all.

The overall effectivity of these AE initiatives is not the concern of this paper. Rather, the question is whether and in what way do AE measures, provided both by community organisations and the state, take account of women's interests? It will be argued, that neither in terms of the stated goals of AE, or in the provision by AE community organisations or the state, is the specificity of women's interests recognised.

In order to do so, it is necessary at the outset to consider what constitutes women's interests. It is only then that the question can be posed as to how far the ideologies of AE and its actual delivery provide for these interests. Before embarking on this task, however, a preliminary point must be made. A considerable debate has been waged in the literature covering the classification of the field of AE. Whether the attempts at taxonomy warrant the space devoted to them is highly problematical and it is not intended to enter into this issue here. Instead, utilizing Millar's

(1991) classification, three major variants of AE, distinguished in terms of the distinct ideological claims made by their proposals, are examined.

There are, no doubt, other currents of AE which would warrant examination in terms of the gender issue posed in this paper. However, no claim is made here to complete coverage. The main objective lies elsewhere – to provide a frame of reference for the analysis of gender in AE and to apply this to three important currents in AE.

WOMEN'S NEEDS AND INTERESTS

In what is now a much quoted and highly influential article, Molyneux (1985) questioned a number of assumptions about the participation of women in the Nicaraguan struggle against the dictator Somoza, and their continuing subordination in the post-revolutionary situation. She said that the assumptions were:

> ... that gender interests are the equivalent of women's interests, that gender is the principal determinant of women's interest, and that women's subjectivity, real or potential, is structured uniquely through gender effects. It is, by extension, also supposed that women have certain common interests by virtue of their gender, and that these interests are primary for women (p. 231).

She rejected these assumptions, arguing that it was not possible to speak about women as an homogenous category because of the multifactoral causes of women's oppression and "the extreme variability of its forms of existence across class and nation". For this reason, she claimed the notion of women's interests in general as untenable. For reasons associated with social positioning related to class, ethnic and gender differences, she said that while there may be some general interests, "it is difficult, if not impossible, to generalize about women's interests". This is an extremely important point and is particularly relevant to this paper. Women's interests may coincide at certain moments but their differences create different needs. So, for example, the needs of a woman in an isolated rural area must be very different from one inhabiting a shack in a shanty town, and so on.

Molyneux then distinguished between strategic and practical gender interests. Strategic interests are, she argued, directly related to women's subordination and would "assist in the formulation of strategic objectives to overcome [this] subordination". And here the key word is *subordination*. Strategic interests are those which correspond to feminists' definition of "real" interests, and would not be recognised as such except by feminists.

> The demands that are formulated on this basis are usually termed "feminist" as is the level of consciousness required to struggle effectively for them (p. 233).

This position takes as given that women are, in general, subordinate to men as is reflected in the following. Various UNESCO documents have estimated that women work two-thirds of the world's working hours, earn one-tenth of the world's income, own one-tenth of the world's property, produce half of the world's agricultural production, constitute two thirds of the world's illiterate population, and head a third of the world's households. Such global figures are somewhat shocking. As Taylor (1985) said, in the preface to a world report on women, in relation to the role of women in the production of food,

> it was not until four years into the Decade of Women [1975–1985] – at The Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 1979 – that the international community began to realise the extent of women's contribution to agriculture.

Subordination occurs in all aspects of women's lives – in the private sphere at home and in the public sphere of education, work, and politics, in urban and rural areas which take distinctive forms. However, it does not follow that women necessarily recognise or acknowledge that they live under subordinate conditions. For the majority, this is the "natural" state which they do not question. Consequently, the majority would not identify strategic interests which could lead to changes in their material conditions and remove the bases of subordination. Thus many women would not question their traditional role, which involves child care and household management and, where applicable, food production or work, of whatever nature, which supports their families.

> In contrast to these strategic interests are "practical gender interests" which are,
> ... usually a response to an immediate perceived need, and they do not generally entail a strategic goal such as women's emancipation or gender equality (Molyneux, p. 233).

So, for example, practical interests could be related to women's domestic duties, where their exploitation and double burden, as it is for so many urban poor women working outside the home, is taken as "normal" and unquestionable. Thus learning about primary health care could facilitate effective means of child-care. Or teaching women how to dress-make could enable them to earn some income working from home. This could have the unintended consequences of upsetting the power balance between men and women. But overall, most training and education is associated with women's "traditional" roles which serve their practical interests insofar as they enable them to employ survival strategies[4] but at the same time reinforce women's traditional roles. In so doing, the meeting of women's practical interests in no way threatens the status quo or alters the existing power structures.

Molyneux fully recognises the difficulties involved in realising women's strategic interests and prioritises practical interests. She says,

> ... the formulation of strategic interests can only be effective as a form of intervention when full account is taken of these practical interests. Indeed, it is the politicization of these practical interests and their transformation into strategic interests that women can identify with and support which constitutes a central aspect of feminist political practice (p. 234).

But politicization leading to a recognition of strategic interests does not necessarily follow on from a satisfying of or accomodating of practical interests, which very often involve strategies for survival. And these strategies may be related to individual behaviour and individual attainment.

The application of this distinction to AE provision immediately alerts one to question which of women's interests, practical or strategic, are being targetted? Not surprisingly, AE in the main, as the following discussion will illustrate, is guided by principles which primarily directs its activities to deal with underprivileged people. Insofar as AE provision is related to women specifically, it will be demonstrated that it meets women's practical interests, thereby providing women with strategies to deal with and survive their overall harsh living conditions. The assistance which provides women with strategies for survival does not necessarily lead to a transfor-

mation of their lives through their liberation from subordination. Thus, AE contributes unintentionally to the reinforcement of women's traditional roles, in that much of what is done is located within women's conventional roles. The consequences of all this is not recognised by AE because its goals are informed by the interests of underprivileged people as a whole, without taking account of the specificity of women's needs.

AE PROVISION AND WOMEN'S INTERESTS

It is generally recognised that AE occupies a marginal position in the educational world, in that it lies outside the "formal frame" of mainstream education. Its structures tend to be informal and not necessarily subject to professional and/or state control. Yet in spite of the similarity with some aspects of the formal education system, AE qualifications do not have the same status as the formal system. Contradictorily, although the formal education system provides a pathway through from schooling at childhood to the tertiary level for adults, it is not termed adult education when it reaches the tertiary level.

Adult educators represent a disparate group of people with no consensus about the goals and aims of AE. Consequently, their ideologies as a whole are not consistent and reflect different political beliefs and different understandings of the agenda of adult education, all of which affects the content. Literacy classes, for example, may be used to inculcate the dominant values of the ruling class (Donald) or as part of a liberation movement (Freire, 1972). The reasons for this are, obviously, complex and reside both in the historical development of adult education and in the social conditions at any one time. AE provision is wide ranging, ever changing, responding to transformations in the socio-economic conditions, and serving specific sectors of the population, as its history in South Africa reflects.

These disparate movements all form part of what constitutes the AE movement. Millar's (1991) framework of "non-formal continuing education", subsequently used in National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) AE (1992), demarcated three major areas in which the AE provisions fall, and these are compensatory, upgrading and cultural/political functions. Each of these areas will be examined to establish the question posed earlier, and that is how far the ideologies of AE and its actual delivery provide for women's practical and strategic interests?

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Compensatory education can refer to comparable levels of the formal education system, from the acquisition of literacy to university entrance qualification. AE is concerned to redress all these deficits among the population, and its ideology is to ensure that the population becomes literate.

Beginning with illiteracy, the rates are extremely high in South Africa and always have been, given the failure of successive governments to provide a basic education for the black population. The history of AE provision in this area was provided initially by two main groups – the Communist Party and liberals. To combat the appalling level of illiteracy in the 1920s and 1930s

> ... networks of privately established literacy classes and night schools, started in the 1920s and '30s mainly by radical and liberal political groupings, develop[ed] in urban centres and cater[ed] mainly for workers engaged in the broad processes of urbanisation and industriali-

> sation. By 1955, there were about 10 000 African night-school students in the cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pietermaritzburg (Millar, 1991, p. 113)

Largely through the work of the SA Institute of Race Relations the first literacy organisation was established (French, 1992). But the whole movement was severely curtailed following the banning of the Communist Party and the closure of all night schools in the 1960s.

In regard to the classes run by the Communist Party, their concern was informed by political strategies: to help combat illiteracy among the working class and to recruit literate people to the Communist Party; the concern of the liberals was informed by liberal thought and to achieve change through reform. The question of gender never entered into the goals of either group.

The numbers reached by these schools barely scratched the surface of the problem. These night schools flourished in mainly urban areas throughout the country, and the dissension between the radicals and the liberals continued. In the Cape, for example, liberals played a leading role, "concentrating on educational advancement on purely academic lines" avoiding "any political context" (Wilson, 1988), unlike some of the Communist Party schools. The state finally crushed all these schools, and it was only after the mid 1970s that the state introduced its own night schools or supported church-based schools, in an attempt to combat illiteracy and extend adults' level of schooling with matriculation as the goal. So, once again, NGOs were allowed to re-enter the field.

The state-supported night schools have developed and cater for all levels, from literacy to Standard 10, and now have approximately 67 067 adults. Less than a quarter are in literacy classes, and almost 55% from Standard 8 to Standard 10 (NEPI, ABE, 1992). Industry provides some schooling in predominantly urban areas, but it is not clear at what levels, although probably to equip its own workers to be functionally literate in relation to the needs of the particular enterprise. NGOs account for the rest, but the numbers involved are insignificant.

Overall literacy provision is mimimal. It is estimated that fewer than 100 000 adults are learning to become literate, and this represents less than 1% of all the estimated 15 million illiterates (NEPI, ABE, 1992). The night school movement reaches a relatively small number. The NGOs, while highly innovative, cannot be seen to have significantly devised a means of overcoming illiteracy. Rather the contrary seems to be the case. Furthermore, some research commissioned by SACHED indicates that people who never went to school seldom, if ever, attend literacy classes.

A start on the history and details of current provision of night school and literacy measures has been made (French, 1992), but nothing has been written in relation to provision for women. What follows is highly speculative and indicates the urgent need for research.

It would appear that night schools prior to the banning by the state were directed to the male worker, although some people who were active in the Communist Party night schools do recall a few women attending[5]. Black women worked (and still do) predominantly as domestic workers (and it is possible that some night schools did cater for small numbers of them in white areas). Those who worked in industry at that stage were mainly garment workers and represented the township elite. They were educated and the highest paid group of black women workers (Berger, 1992).

Wilson's (1988) comments about the night schools operating in the Cape suggests that the classes were for men. She said:

> Migrants who were illiterate and confused in a new urban worker society among speakers of two foreign languages, far from wives and children, and with their few leisure hours spent in the direst of living quarters, found a warm, responsive and creative home in the night schools (p. 303).

There is, overall, a dearth of information both historically and contemporarily about ABE facilities for women. NGOs may cater for women and indeed now some have targeted women (USWE, for example), but it is not clear to what extent and what needs of the women will be met by these endeavours.

There are isolated examples in which some aspects of women's interests are taken into account. Consider the example of facilities offered by Maryland Centre in Cape Town. Sister Marina of that Centre said, in an interview, that her literacy programme was no longer concerned "with traditional methods of learning the alphabet and always sitting down with pencils and paper", quite the contrary. Literacy, she said, was "more than just reading and writing. It is a weapon against exploitation and oppression" and to back this up she cited examples of women domestic servants who were able to talk about the way in which they were treated by their employers, or farm workers whose white employer began to complain when they questioned the amount they received or the deductions she made for goods given to them.

A literacy programme for her had taken on a different meaning than that associated with the more formal method of teaching reading and writing. Her ideology on the role of literacy training had clearly undergone a change, and now was seen as a tool "against exploitation and oppression", reflecting the influence of Freire. But did this oppression also include women's oppression as women? Sister Marina did envisage literacy programmes as enabling women to confront some of the problems they experienced as women, although she did not specify which these were. Was it to help women in their strategies for survival thus meeting their practical interests? Was it to help women in their strategic interests? This was quite unclear and would have to be investigated further.

If, for example, women domestic workers are targeted in literacy programmes, the question arises: What are their specific needs? Being literate – being capable of taking adequate messages, reading recipes, communicating more adequately with children in their care and so on – could enhance a woman's earning capacity and this would have obvious reprecussions on her survival strategies. However, while there is no shortage of women seeking domestic work, an overall improvement of domestic workers' conditions would probably only occur through unionisation. Should this happen, domestic workers are likely to begin to address their strategic interests. But this is a long way from providing literacy classes for this group of women workers, unless it was conducted under the auspices of a trade union.

The differentiation that exists among women relates not only to their status, but includes how they support their families, whether they work and where they work – in the formal or informal sector, and so on. This would highlight, in the first place, the particular practical interests of the particular group of women. And here a lesson may be learned from community work in India. One project conducted among illiterate village women employed as daily labourers did not introduce literacy classes until the women themselves demanded these facilities, and this occurred after three years' work among the women[6]. In this instance, women's practical inter-

ests were met initially, and only when they themselves expressed their desire to become literate in order to check that the supervisor was not cheating them, was this successfully provided. It could be seen that this could lead to women's consideration of the overall conditions relating to their subordination, a recognition of their strategic interests.

A coherent policy on literacy provision which aims initially to meet women's practical needs is complex. To begin with, any overall policy would have to take as its starting point the existence of multiple literacies, which as the ABE Report (1993), says refers to the "performance of widely varying personal, social and economic functions" (p. 3), and also widely varying gender differences, a point that the ABE working group did not take into account.

UPGRADING

> Upgrading refers to continuing education that has as its function the development of knowledge and competence that leads to increased effectiveness in specific contexts, usually the work place. Whereas compensatory education is school-related and general, upgrading is work related and specific. [It is related to] the industrial training effort and has as a major goal the incorporation of black workers at raising levels in the industrial sector" (Millar, 1992, p. 114)

Upgrading adults' skills in South Africa is only peripherally provided by NGO. The trade union movement, business and commerce and the state, through the Department of "Manpower", has and currently is addressing this and provide various types of training. As in England, where there is evidence that community organisations concerned initially with provision for community activists have, with increasing unemployment, given way to providing courses which result in certification and qualifications related to skilling (Lovett, 1988), similar developments may take place here. However, for a variety of reasons, but largely because adult educationists located primarily in NGOs have been governed by an ideology on AE as a social movement, upgrading has not been seen as a major goal in South Africa.

Clearly the revitalisation of the economy, and its development needed to transport South Africa into a state where it can compete with Third World countries which have entered successfully advanced industrial capitalism, is essential. Among other things, it is taken for granted right across the political spectrum that this development can only be attained with a highly skilled, technologically literate group of workers. And it is this notion, whether right or wrong, which seems to be generally accepted. Given the low skill-level of the majority of the work-force, upgrading becomes a matter of urgency and is likely to be high on the list of priorities.

But the gender of the skilled workers is never discussed. The work-force is spoken about in abstract terms, but when analysed it becomes apparent that the skilled population is defined as male. This is so for many reasons but not least is that, associated with ideologies surrounding male and female roles, and consequently what constitutes appropriate male and female labour, men are seen as the family providers and women as the family caretakers, not engaged permanently in the labour market. Women become invisible in the labour force.

COSATU is an exception to this. It has played a prominent role in delineating this field and does single out women. Berger (1992) refers to the Third Congress in July 1989, when the prin-

ciple of the development of women's leadership within the trade union movement was accepted. Their policy now goes beyond that. According to the HRD NEPI document (1992), COSATU has plans to upgrade the qualifications among its existing members through provision of basic education for all, and has extensive goals to effect equity for women workers. According to the HRD Report (1992), COSATU wants

- Women's skills to be recognized and paid for – 'equal wages for skills of equal value';
- Women trained for skilled jobs normally performed by men;
- Career paths for areas of traditional women's work; and
- To make it easier for women to receive training – by provision of child-care facilities for all trainees, equal facilities for men and women, and non-sexist documentation (p. 38).

All these goals are admirable and would require, not only extensive adult education programmes, but also the removal of a number of obstacles.

But it is necessary to recall black women's overall position in the labour market, predominantly in domestic work, with smaller numbers in production and the service industry, generally earning far less than men. Where they are employed they occupy the lowest paid, lowest skilled, and lowest status jobs in industry. In industry, for example, many women work as cleaners, and, as Budlender (1992) pointed out, even if they become functionally literate through a skilling programme at work, there can be no career path in such work. To progress such women would have to find new employment, and that is no easy task.

Nor can it be assumed that women would take advantage of available training. There are factors which mitigate against this, primarily because of their domestic responsibilities. Women's work in the labour market cannot be divorced from their broader familial responsibilities, and with the increasing number of households headed by women, this becomes even more important. The range of women's responsibilities goes way beyond pre-school child-care. They care for dependents, supervise older children and have household labour to perform. Because of their responsibilities at home the amount of time they can devote to continuing education is limited and their motivation is likely to be low.

Then there is another dimension. Breaking the monopoly that men have had over the job market has made little progress in Western European countries over the past 20 years in spite of equal opportunity programmes. Here, there is likely to be a struggle by men to safeguard their skilled work once they gain access to it. With the collapse of apartheid, black men, in particular, are striving to acquire skill qualifications in order to join the ranks of the higher paid artisan. Having campaigned for so long to get access to skilled work, is it likely they will allow women into their ranks? This puts into question one of the COSATU goals, viz. for "women [to] train for skilled jobs normally performed by men". Men may legitimate their exclusion of women on the grounds of the age-old argument that they should earn a "family wage" (Land, 1980; Beechey, 1986) and already there are informal reports that they legitimate the position of women as dependents in the family by invoking ideological arguments about "traditional" family values which prescribe women's activities (Wolpe, 1992). In addition, women's labour has often undercut that of men's, and this is another potential source of conflict between men and women.

Training in the existing labour market for women, therefore, involves more than rhetoric. If it is to succeed, some fundamental changes will have to be effected. The task is formidable, but one which needs to be tackled. AE can play an important role in this sphere but not only would women's specific practical needs be taken into account, but the skilling of women needs to be located in the social conditions which reflect on their strategic interests.

Upgrading also applies to the unemployed worker. The Department of "Manpower" spent R93 million in 1991, "mainly on unemployed work seekers" (NEPI, 1993). The development of these and other state initiatives[7] as Millar (1991) pointed out in reference to the formal economy, was the concern of the state in beginning to "correct" the deficiencies of the system and to forge a link between both formal and non-formal facilities. This latter initiative, he said, arose from a shift in official thinking and the "active partnership between the state and private sector" following the disruption caused by students' and workers' resistance to the apartheid regime.

The Department of "Manpower" has and will commission training and may work together with organisations, such as the Western Cape Training Centre which was established in 1986, in terms of the Manpower Training Act No. 56 of 1981. Together they may set out to provide training for workers in such areas as driving, building related courses, mechanical courses, food and allied industry (WCTC, 1993). The training is likely to focus on labour intensive schemes for men which will not only provide temporary employment, particularly in black urban areas, but will also train them while on the job. Where training will be made available to women it is likely to be in traditional areas which will not threaten male preserves, such as sewing classes, but this falls under what constitutes the informal economy, which is briefly considered below.

There are, therefore, two levels of upgrading. One is the reskilling of the existing labour force, which, given its nature, may not significantly affect women. The other is skilling at the lower levels of the occupational structure, largely among the unemployed with little or no skills. Here, as pointed out, the labour intensive training of semi-skilled and unskilled men will seldom include women. As already mentioned above, ideologically women are not recognised as an integral part of the labour force. Rather their major role is seen as homemaker and all that that involves, and women, themselves conceptualise their needs in these terms. But more and more women, who are the main providers for their families and dependents, are in need of employment in the urban areas. This has repercussions on their practical needs *vis á vis* employment, but these, as the discussion above indicates, are seldom taken seriously.

The discussion, so far, has not included the informal economy, which Millar's definition excluded. Yet this "is a critically important source of economic growth and employment for burgeoning Third World populations" (HRD, 1992, p. 59), a phenomenon recognised by such august bodies as ILO and the World Bank. It is interesting that AE report (1993) also ignored this very important area, even though a number of NGOs do provide informal training for income-generating work.

Women work extensively in the informal sector. Friedman and Hambridge (1991) suggest that it may be seen as preferable to the low wages they would earn elsewhere, although Masdell (1991) says, in his study in Pietermaritzburg, that women are mainly hawkers and "hawking is survival struggle, rather than capitalist enterprise", suggesting that they have no other alternative. Where women are given training for the informal sector it tends to be in the sphere of their traditional activities, such as sewing, knitting and crochet classes, and it is here that NGOs have

provided such training and education. It is regarded as something women can do easily from their homes, and simultaneoulsy generate some income for themselves and their family.

> ... The WCTC believes there is opportunity for people to learn the basics of producing high quality ethnic style clothing for sale to the less privileged areas in the Peninsula, especially if this clothing is in the colours that are required by the local people (p. 34).

Neither AE (1993) nor HRD (1993) reports acknowledged this type of training provided for women largely by NGOs, even though the HRD report referred to different forms of training which have developed in other countries, saying that "informal training must be flexible and of high quality, but also affordable" (p. 63). Clearly the upgrading of skills in the informal sector, given the size and the poverty of urban groups, is particularly important, and more so for women. This blindness reflects the overall neglect of specific aspects of women's practical needs by the state, NGOs and policy writers. The provision of training in the limited range of traditional work cannot solve the problems of urban poverty, inadequate housing, primary health care, to mention just a few problems, all of which affect women's everyday lives. Research into the lives of women in urban areas which would begin to detail what constitutes urban women's practical needs could then inform the work of these various agencies.

There is one section of upgrading in which provision does appear to affect a certain group of women, and this is night school. Although night schools can be seen as a compensatory form of provision, in South Africa obtaining a matriculation exemption constitutes a basis for upgrading for many hundreds of teachers employed by the DET, as Millar (1991) pointed out. Although from 1939 onwards until the banning of night schools facilities were developed in urban areas to include "skill development" (Bird, 1986), it is only since the reintroduction of night schools that women have benefited. But such schools seem to cater predominantly for women already in employment. It is not known to what extent unemployed women would take advantage of these facilities. Research would have to be carried out to determine what women themselves attest as their main need in enhancing their levels of education.

In conclusion, it is necessary to recognise that the available provisions must correspond with the specific needs of the women in relation to both their practical and strategic interests. Even when provisions could lead to upgrading, it does so within the constraints of social formation which perpetuates the overall conditions of women's subordination.

CULTURAL/POLITICAL

The final section in the classificatory system is the cultural/political, which includes some measures provided by the state[8]. Under the heading of cultural programmes, religious, sporting, and some extra-mural work of some universities were included. Because the cultural and recreational facilities are directed largely towards the middle classes and not the underprivileged people, these aspects of AE will not be considered in this paper. Political AE refers to "the networks of community, worker and student organisations with the goals of social reconstruction and conscientising agendas" (Millar, 1991). Adult educationists working in community organisations would have espoused an ideology of social justice which focused on how the conditions of the underprivileged could be improved and, for many, how the same people

could attain political power. Organisations in this category proliferated in the 1980s in the face of massive state repressive measures, and played an important part in the struggle against apartheid.

A survey and history of political community organisations have been captured in several publications by the Centre for Continuing and Adult Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape. *The Struggle for Democracy* (Matiwana et al, 1989) was one such publication and surveyed organisations which "have historically been viewed as training grounds for the development of leadership skills" (p. 14). To qualify for inclusion in the study, none of the organisations could have received a state subsidy or been concerned solely with leisure or recreational pursuits; they had to provide informal or non-formal education. Education was conceputalised in its broadest sense and included all types, however limited, which could be interpreted as training for democratic leadership and participation: a workshop of a few hours, learning how to run a committee, counselling, legal support for detainees, discussion groups and so on all constituted "education". There appeared few limits as to what qualified as educational – everything that related to the very broad goals of overthrowing apartheid and setting up an alternate society. And when organisations directly engaged with community issues it was thought that the people who worked within the framework of these organisations were being groomed for taking over power within the communities: they were learning how to organise, run committees, engage with bureaucracy on behalf of the community and so on.

Tangential to this notion that community organisations are engaged in an educative process, and clearly reflecting Freire's influence, is the concept of education as an "empowering process". "Empowerment" has become a catch word, and has even entered the vocabulary of politicians. When now President Clinton was campaigning he too spoke of empowering the weak and disadvantaged!

In South Africa "empowering" has become synonomous with the overthrow of the apartheid system and the establishment of a nonracial democracy. Community organisations which were engaged in work that could be termed educational and "empowering" fell within the ambit of those associated with "social movement and radical change" and qualified, according to Lovett, as adult education. Empowering was defined in *Struggle for Democracy* as,

> ... people gaining an understanding of and control over social economic and/or political forces in order to improve their standing in society. An empowering process is the means to bring about such understanding and control (Matiwana et al, 1989, p. 20)

In accordance with this definition, the empowerment process is linked both to an understanding by individuals of the operation of power relations in society and, following this, control over the socio-economic and/or political power. This process of "empowerment" takes place through the participation of individuals in organisations which, provided they are opposed to apartheid forces, will through their actions within these organisations bring about the collapse of the regime. It is as though the understanding and the participation provide the necessary conditions for overthrowing the whole state apparatus, as well as gaining some measure of control over industry, commerce and all that constitutes the "social economic force". Clearly, in line with AE provision, what constitutes "empowerment" must be much more limited and, as Lazarus argued (1990), is located in the individual's psychology. "Empowerment" may be intimately connected with under-

standing the conditions of oppression, but cannot deliver the means to obtain actual control. This involves a series of complex political actions which are way beyond the scope of AE provision. To talk in terms of "empowerment" is to mystify the whole process.

The question that can now be posed is: To what extent can community organisations engaged in political AE contribute to the meeting of women's needs? There is little doubt that at the height of the struggle against the state, and even upto the, present, women participated fully in community organisations. Certainly many women gained self confidence, and developed their organising abilities in the process. But which of women's practical needs were at the forefront?

Issues relating to fighting rent increases, absence of community services, absence of transport and so on were high on the agenda of community organisations. While these obviously impinged on the lives of women as the household managers, the problems were subsumed and appropriated under the heading of "community". Indeed, what comprises the "community" is taken-for granted and it appears as an homogeneous group of people, with common identity and shared goals. Communities are much more heterogeneous than this.

Although many of the problems dealt with under community have direct relevance to survival strategies for women, the discourse on community problems ignored the direct link with women's lives. This in itself is not surprising, particularly as issues relating to gender differences have been scorned in the political context. They have been defined as an unwelcome consequence of bourgeois Western feminism with no place in South Africa. It was put very directly in 1989, by "Clara" from the underground in South Africa:

> If we understand that the women question is at this point in time a subordinate, less antagonistic contradiction in South Africa, then we will draw correct conclusions about when and how to organise around women's experiences in the different stages of our revolution.
> It should be clear that the total emancipation of women is only realisable under a developed socialist economy, and only if, in each stage of our revolution, we organise women to participate fully and raise their demands as part of the people's demands (Clara, 1989, p. 40).

Women's concerns had, therefore, according to "Clara", to be postponed to a later date.

This, the political sector of AE provision, is the most problematic. Under the guiding principle of AE as a social movement concerned with redressing the wrongs of the underprivileged people, a number of initiatives have been taken to "empower" the people. But the actual content of the provisions is unclear and it has yet to be established to what extent the recipients have benefited. As for women, their actual practical needs do not determine the agenda, although they are likely to benefit from any improvements achieved for the "community". It is not surprising that in the present day discourse on AE provision, this sector, which is furthest removed from economic factors, is considered the least important (Framework, 1993).

CONCLUSION

This paper has demonstrated that AE encompasses far more work than is usually ascribed to that provided by the NGOs. While the ideology of adult educationists in many of the NGOs might properly be described as related to a social movement ideal directed towards social change, this

is not necessarily the case with other educationists working particularly in areas related to the labour market. Here the ideology is informed by economic factors. The overall improvement of the socio-economic status of the country is linked to the level of skill of the labour force, and, tangentially this also applies to people working in the informal sector.

The people who are the subject of AE provision are, in South Africa, the underprivileged for a variety of reasons. But when deconstructed, the underprivileged turn out to be predominantly men because women's needs are simply not articulated. But the danger of talking about women's needs in general was pointed out, and the paper aimed to demarcate the different aspects of women's practical and strategic needs. If AE fails to take note of the particularity of the needs of different groups of women in accordance with their specific circumstances, then the attempts at redress of the many inequities generated by apartheid and the righting of the economy must fail miserably.

NOTES

1. It may be pertinent to draw a distinction between AE provision and the aid or development programmes of donor agencies. The latter tend to concentrate their work in rural areas. It is interesting that these two areas are treated as though they are quite different although development work does involve a certain amount of education. However, for the purposes of this paper AE provision will not include the work of agencies which primarily are concerned with aid or development. The paper focuses exclusively on urban areas.
2. As a result of the focus on combating apartheid and the political alignment of the white working class with the state, such initiatives were not directed towards the white working class. I am not aware of a history of AE provision for this group.
3. Although Millar's classification was originally drawn up in 1985 for a specific purpose, it has been adopted in the recent NEPI exercise by the AE working group.
4. As Sylvia Chant has pointed out there is a growing body of literature concerned with women and survival in urban areas. "'Survival strategies' is a term used fairly commonly to describe the basic activities of underprivileged individuals and households (usually the latter) in the process of daily reproduction" (1991, p. 1). She delineates income generation, domestic labour and social reproduction, which includes education, health care, housing and so on as of "central importance".
5. There does not appear to be any published record about these schools. I have asked several people who taught in them but their responses vary. One person says that he did recall some women attending his class, but others are not sure whether the classes were mixed or not.
6. This information was given to me personally in discussions held with Nirmala Nair, a community worker from India.
7. Other state initiatives include the SADF which has a literacy programme and the Prisons Services which has an educational programme (AE, 1993).
8. Millar (1991), regarded the military service programme and the media as forms of adult education through the political agenda they both contain. But this, I would argue, is part of the ideological state apparatus and does not fall under the heading of AE in that neither the overall goal of the military, nor that of the media, is educational in the sense of actively setting out to educate the soldiers or the viewers. To include these sectors of the state would be to extend the concept of education to include all aspects of social interaction. There is no limit, then, as to what comprises adult education.

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THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES AND ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES

UNIVERSITY-BASED LITERACY THEORY AND PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA: PLANNING THE WORK

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This paper is concerned with what is required of university work in adult literacy and basic education in South Africa at this time. The paper draws from and is an extension of the thinking that went into the Independent Development Trust-commissioned paper entitled 'Development Strategies in Adult Education'.

The first section of the paper, through a review of the 'new literacy studies' presents an account of what is thought to be the best emerging theoretical orientation in the field, internationally.

The second section of the paper develops an account of how particular understandings of literacy have shaped policy directions in adult literacy and, in turn, have been shaped by wider political concerns. This section is particularly concerned with policies that aim to bring about large-scale provision of adult literacy and examines their assumptions and implications.

The third section of the paper examines the nature of work that has been developed and delivered by university adult education departments in South Africa, and what is possible and appropriate for the future.

The final section starts to develop a programme of work.

PART ONE: LITERACY STUDIES

Internationally, there have been a few notable historical studies of literacy but there was little in the way of established or emerging traditions of literacy-linked research and theorisation before the 1970s. While there is a body of research focused specifically on the cognitive consequences and problems of acquisition and remedial work around reading and writing, there has been little focus on literacy as a social practice. Over the last two decades, a handful of anthropologists, socio-linguists, historians and educationalists have been attempting to develop more rigorous and sophisticated theoretical and methodological tools for analysing literacy in social context. This body of work has not as yet had much impact on the worlds of literacy practitioners and less on policy-makers in South Africa. Its impact will start to be felt, however, as it produces further tools for understanding the problems and complexities of policy and practice, as practices are brought to closer account and policy becomes concerned with the difficulties associated with success in this field. At the same time, it will not be surprising if the *public*, as opposed to the *academic*, understanding of literacy will continue to make exaggerated claims on behalf

of literacy's social effectivity. It is likely to carry symbolic dimensions beyond its capacity, given the intractable domains it is linked to: the economy, development, progress, democracy, health and happiness. While literacy might continue to accrue exaggerated and mythical dimensions in public, however, it must even more so be a concern of serious research to delineate those things which can really be said about literacy and those things which adhere to it like hopeful baggage.

THE 'NEW LITERACY STUDIES'

Influential literacy-linked studies at universities on both sides of the Atlantic have emerged over the last fifteen years or so, in a number of different disciplines, sharing some key assumptions, and have become known as the *'new literacy studies'*.

The literacy myth

Firstly, these scholars have set up as a target the popular and prevailing concept of literacy that assign its acquisition with positive and unproblematic outcomes. Street's early contribution was to characterise the prevailing views of literacy as embodying an *autonomous* view of literacy, where literacy, regardless of context, was seen to embody particular good effects. Implicitly, literacy *did things* to people, regardless of context, e. g. raising their cognitive skills, enabling them to be detached and developing a meta-cognitive understanding or rational outlook that was crucial for progress.[1]

Street's attack on the 'autonomous' conception of literacy is very similar to others' attacks on the *'literacy myth'*. Harvey Graff attacked the essential assumption that cloaks popular and prevailing conceptions of *literacy as a path to development*. Neither writing nor printing alone, he argues, are 'agents of change'. Their impacts are determined by their social use. Literacy is, he stresses,

> ... A technology or set of techniques for communications and for reproducing written or printed materials. It shouldn't be taken as anything more or less.[2]

Nonetheless, the concept 'literacy' has become an ove-rburdened social signifier.

> In the popular imagination, literacy is the most significant distinguishing feature of a civilised man and a civilised society.... The assumption that non-literacy is a problem with dreadful social and personal consequences is not only held by laymen, it is implicit in the writings of academics as well.[3]

Such assumptions about literacy he labels *'the literacy myth'*.

Graff details what the mythical associations around literacy include:

> ... In typical formulations or listings, attitudes ranging *from* empathy, innovativeness, achievement orientation, 'cosmo-politanness', information and media awareness, national identification, technological acceptedness, rationality and commitment to democracy, *to* opportunism, linearity of thought and behaviour, or urban residence![4]

On other levels, literacy 'thresholds' are seen as requirements for economic development, 'take-offs', 'modernisation', political development and stability, standards of living, fertility control and so on. 'The number of asserted consequences and ecological correlations is literally massive.'

James Gee has another such list, drawn from a study of the claims and expectations of literacy that have abounded. The 'literacy myth' is seen to include claims that literacy leads to logical and analytical modes of thought; general and abstract use of language; critical and rational thought; a sceptical and questioning attitude; a distinction between myth and history; the recognition of the importance of time and space; complex and modern governments; political democracy and greater social equity; economic development; wealth and productivity; political stability; urbanisation; lower birth rates; people who are achievement oriented, productive, cosmopolitan, politically aware, more globally (nationally and internationally) and less locally oriented, who have more liberal and humane social attitudes; are less likely to commit a crime; and more likely to take the rights and duties of citizenship seriously.[5]

Gee argues that the traditional concept of literacy as the ability to read and write is deeply problematic.

This traditional notion rips literacy out of any social context and treats it as an autonomous, asocial cognitive skill with little or nothing to do with human relationships. It cloaks literacy's connection to political power, to social identity and to ideologies ... often in the service of privileging certain types of literacies and certain types of people.[6]

Literacy and ideology

Against the 'autonomous' view of literacy, Street put forward what he called an ideological view of literacy. The move, in essence, is a shift away from a focus on individual and discrete skills to a focus on reading and writing as cultural practices. The new formulation stresses the sorts of social practices in which reading, writing and talking are embedded and out of which they develop, rather than the private cognitive 'skills' of individuals.

Criticised for constructing a dichotomous view and of constructing an approach to literacy that leaves no substance to the concept, Street has said that his perspective is one that does not deny the significance of technical aspects of reading and writing, such as decoding, sound/shape, correspondence and reading 'difficulties'; rather, he argues that these features are always embedded in particular social practices: 'the socialisation process through which reading and writing are acquired and the power relations between groups engaged in different literacy practices are central to the understanding of specific issues and "problems"'.[7] As Gee puts it:

> In the end, we might say that, contrary to the literacy myth, *nothing* follows from literacy or schooling. Much follows, however, from what comes with literacy and schooling, what literacy and schooling come wrapped up in, namely the attitudes, values, norms and beliefs (at once social, cultural, political) that always accompany literacy and schooling ... the focus of literacy studies cannot be, and ought not to be, on *language*, or even *literacy* itself as traditionally constructed. Rather, the focus must be on *social practices*.[8]

The route to this orientation on literacy needs to be traced briefly to make sense of these provocative claims, and for developing an understanding of the implications for research and practice.

Orality and literacy

The offensive of the 'new literacy studies' has its origins in the debate over the oral culture–literate culture contrast, and its submergence in the 'primitive culture–modern culture perspectives. Street and Gee, in particular have engaged directly with this literature, and Gee provides a succinct summary of the debate. He sees the primitive–civilised dichotomy that informed modernisation and development discourses as having been broken down nearly completely at the hands of modern social anthropology, through anthropologists like Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Evans-Pritchard and Robert Horton. In various ways they have shown that so-called *primitive* people did make use of the same elements of thought, though applied to different content. There are, undoubtedly, no primitive languages, those of many 'primitive' cultures being among the world's most complex.

Studies concerned with society and cognition keep the distinction, however, in revised form. The start is Levi Strauss's distinction between primitive and modern culture, between two distinct ways of knowing; 'two distinct modes of scientific thought', one 'supremely concrete', the other 'supremely abstract'. One proceeds from the angle of sensible qualities and the other from formal properties[9].

In Eric Haverlock's *Preface to Plato* and Jack Goody's *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, it is the crucial social technology of literacy that is at the base of the shift from primitive to modern mindset. Walter Ong's *Orality and Literacy* popularises these ideas. He makes the case for the view of literacy as a strong and socially determining technology, as being the pivot around which major differences between broad types of society are drawn: between oral and literate cultures.[10]

Ong's perspective is that writing – commitment of the word to space – enlarges the potentiality of language 'almost beyond measure' and 'restructures thought':

> Oral cultures indeed produce powerful and beautiful performances of high artistic and human worth, which are no longer even possible once writing has taken possession of the psyche. Nevertheless, without writing, human consciousness cannot achieve its fuller potentials, cannot produce other powerful and beautiful creations. In this sense, orality needs to produce and is destined to produce writing. Literacy, as will be seen, is absolutely necessary for the development not only of science but also history, philosophy, explicative understanding of literature and of any art, and indeed for the explanation of language (including oral speech) itself.[11]

Lev Vygotsky and A. Luria's work with literate and illiterate peasants and their conclusions have been major influences in this tradition. Based on a study of the categorisation processes of literate and illiterate peasants they concluded that major differences exist between literate and non-literate subjects in their uses of abstract reasoning processes. But Gee points to a major empirical problem in their work: It is extremely difficult to separate the influence of literacy as 'reading and writing' from that of formal schooling, since in most parts of the world the two go together. But school involves much more than becoming literate in the traditional sense.[12] He quotes Wertsch in relation to Vygotsky's work: 'A student is involved in learning a set of complex role relationships, general cognitive techniques, ways of approaching problems, different genres of talk and interaction, and an intricate set of values concerned with communication,

interaction, and society as a whole ...'.[13] Street together with Graff and Brice-Heath have most effectively challenged the orality-literacy perspective, showing that the differences between oral and literate modes have been overstated; that features attributed to one mode rather than the other are in fact features of the social context in which they are embedded, and that in other contexts these features might be attributed to another mode.

Literacy, schooling and cognition

Scribner and Cole's study of literacy among the Vai in Liberia was a major contribution to this debate. They were able to study a context where three different literacies operated, only one of them school-linked. In *The Psychology of Literacy* they show that three different sorts of literacy operate: English literacy acquired in school; an indigenous (syllabic not alphabetic) Vai script and an Arabic literacy used for religious ends. They present what they call a 'practice account' of literacy. They found that each of these literacies had a particular context of use and were able to distinguish between literacy and schooling effects. They concluded that the cognitive effects that are often associated with literacy are not an outcome of literacy as such, but of schooling. They found that illiterate adults, particularly in urban areas may share some of the skills and attitudes usually only associated with literates. Literacy in English, in their study, the only literacy taught in schools, was associated with ability to reason in the abstract and to decontextualise information, but after English literates had been out of school for a number of years they showed no advantage in task-performance as opposed to being able to talk about the task.

The implications are clear: people get better at what they practice in school. Unless these skills are continually practised after school, they die rather quickly, leaving behind, however, the ability to talk about school-based sets of tasks.

In the Vai context, Scribner and Cole concluded that 'schools foster abilities in expository talk in contrived situations' skills which are useless without the institutions that reward them (schools, courts, bureaucracies).[14]

By implication, a type of literacy enhances quite specific skills that are practised in carrying out that literacy. Sweeping claims for substantial and universal cognitive skills resulting from literacy are not sustained by this research. One can also point out that the effect of formal schooling that they describe – being able to engage in 'expository talk in contrived situations' - is itself a fairly specific skill practised a good deal in school.

In other writings, Scribner has extended these arguments to claim that what skills are acquired in adult literacy learning are substantially different to those acquired in schooling.[15]

Scribner and Cole's conclusions are emphatic:

> Our results are in direct conflict with persistent claims that 'deep psychological differences' divide literate and non literate populations ... On no task – logic, abstraction, memory, communication – did we find all non-literates performing at lower levels than all literates ...We can and do claim that literacy promotes skills among the Vai, but we cannot and do not claim that literacy is a necessary or sufficient condition for any of the skills we assessed. ... The evidence we have summarised ... strongly favours the conclusion that literacy is not a surrogate of schooling with respect to its intellectual consequences.[16]

Community literacies and school-based literacies

Shirley Brice-Heath's *Ways with Words*, has made a major contribution to the 'new literacy studies', tracking in depth the social uses of literacy across three neighbouring communities in the Piedmont Carolinas, USA. Her work has given rise to similar efforts, most notably in *Writing in the Community*, edited by David Barton and Ros Ivanic, which covers the ethnographic study of local literacy uses, including two studies in two different Lancasters, one in the UK and one in the USA.[17]

Brice-Heath's communities are Rockville, a white working-class, mill-based community who have been there for four generations; Trackton, a working-class black community with recent memories of a rural existence; and a group of middle-class blacks and whites.

Her focus is on *'literacy events'*, which are any events where print is involved, and she looks at the framing of these events in wider social processes, like care-giving roles, use of space and time, age and sex segregation as well as oral/literate mixes of communication. In the process of becoming socialised into their communities (acquiring a primary discourse in Gee's terms, discussed below), children acquire language and orientation to particular literacies. She finds that school-oriented, middle-class parents actively prepare their children for specific school- and institution-linked behaviours (institutions such as banks, post offices, businesses, etc.), including cued responses (initiation-reply-evaluation). A continuum is seen to run between the practices of the home and the school.

Neither children in Rockville nor Trackton do very well in school despite the fact that both communities consider success in school to be very important. Rockville adults read books to their children but within a restricted frame. They do not connect stories in books with real life. Thus Rockville students are not practised in decontextualising their knowledge or fictionalising events known to them, shifting them about into other frames. In school, they are rarely able to take knowledge based in one context and shift it into another.

Trackton children live in an orally rich culture, constantly in the midst of a stream of verbal and non-verbal communication, almost always being held by adults and other children. Adults don't sit and read to children but children, constantly interact with parents. Imagination and oral dexterity are encouraged and developed, but in heavily contextualised rather than analytically specific frameworks. Adult reading tends to be group-based and with a practical focus (car advertisements) and sustained oral exchange. The dichotomous view of oral and literate practices as seperate actions dissolves under these circumstances.

The implications for literacy studies of Brice-Heath's argument are summarised as follows:

> ... Individuals who have not been socialised into the discourse practices that constitute mainstream school-based literacies must eventually be socialised into them if they are ever to acquire them. The component forms of this literacy must be practiced and one cannot practice a skill one has not been exposed to, cannot engage in a social practice one has not been socialised into (which is what most non-mainstream children are expected to do in school).[18]

Literacy and discourses

Gee, from a socio-linguist's perspective influenced by post-structuralism, locates this perspective firmly within a discourse-centred frame. There is no literacy learning without the accompanying acquisition of a discourse, he argues. Reading classes are not just about learning, they are

about acquisition, of values and perspective, a discursively framed view of the world. He sees all humans, barring serious disorder, as becoming 'members of one discourse free, so to speak'. This primary discourse he describes as – our socio-culturally determined ways of thinking, feeling, valuing and using our native language to focus in face-to-face communication with intimates, which we achieve in our initial socialisation within the 'family', as this is defined within a given culture.

Beyond the primary discourse there are the discourses of secondary institutions (schools, workplace, churches, official offices, etc.). The key point about secondary discourses, he argues, is that they involve interaction with non-intimates, or 'formal' interaction. Primary and secondary discourses, like languages, inter-penetrate each other. The example he gives is that the primary discourse of many middle-class homes has been influenced by those used in school and business.

He defines *literacy* as as *mastery of, or fluent control over, a secondary discourse,* (and, involving print, incidentally). Thus, he says, we can talk of 'multiple literacies' of 'community-based literacies' and 'dominant' and 'non-dominant literacies'. He argues, therefore, that literacy (fluent control or mastery of a secondary Discourse) is a product of acquisition not learning ... 'that it requires exposure to models in natural, meaningful and functional settings, and (overt) teaching is not liable to be very successful – it may even eventually get in the way. *Time spent on learning and not acquisition is time not well spent if the goal is mastery in performance.*[19] (our emphasis)

He provides a new slant on the 'literacy myth' by asserting that traditional approaches to literacy have been caught up in what he calls the 'master myth', or the 'commodity myth' – (work = money; time = money: Time as the flow of human experience, work as daily effort are quantified and equated through the concept of 'money' as 'wages and 'profit'. A range of concepts, including 'literacy', that are dynamic social processes, are commodified by the leavening concept of the market which assumes a common, quantifiable dimension at the heart of all of these – their exchange value.) He sees most discussions of literacy as couched in terms of the same 'master myth' – functional literacy = skills necessary to function in today's job market = 'the economy'. Literacy is measured out and quantified, giving 'reading levels', 'graded texts', levels of literacy skills, rates of literacy.[20]

Multiple literacies

The notion of *multiple literacies* operating is a most challenging one, with substantial implications for practice. Richard Courage has studied the interaction of different literacies: school and non-school, public and private; and their effect on learning by students on a basic writing course in New York City.[21] He first confronts the assumption that illiterates are 'shut out' from the privileged language of public life. He points out that there are other languages of public life besides academic literacy, including the languages of government, business, the labour movement, community organisations, and religious bodies. He gives a brief portrait of two students who bring different non-school literacies to their learning. One, a lay preacher, had a developed sense of reading and writing as public acts, a sense of public texts, like sermons as having 'distinct forms and purposes', an ability to shape and reshape those texts in her mind and an 'awareness of a public audience's need for evidence, persuasive language, authoritative textual refer-

ence and closure'. She performs well in the learning context because of the congruencies of the two contexts. The other student's experience of literacy is a more private one, in the form of personal, sometimes emotionally-charged personal letters that 'tell the news', 'explain herself' and 'get things off her chest'. She lacks confidence, relatively, in a context of public literacy and has great difficulty with the impersonal, 'objective' forms of writing that are required. Her private literacy has few points of congruence with the public literacy of the schools and she is a 'bad learner'. As regards teaching, he concludes, we need to examine the various non-school literacies that people participate in, and find ways to bridge the gap between public and private literacies.

Street has cautioned against the ove-ruse of the concept, however, concerned that it suggests a reified notion of culture, with each 'culture' having its own, appropriate 'literacy'. To avoid this, he prefers the term 'literacy practices' which allows a focus on the mix of dominant and local literacy practices in varying contexts.[22]

Networks and exchange relationships

Arlene Fingeret, in attacking the 'deficit' view of illiterates, argues for the need to understand non-readers within the context of their social world, and finds in her study that many non-reading or -writing adults are far from the stereotypical, incompetent individuals associated with the term 'illiterate'.[23]

In similar vein to the position argued in the report to the Independent Development Trust called 'A Development Strategy in Adult Basic Education', she argues that individuals create social networks that are characterised by reciprocal exchange: networks offer access to most of the resources individuals require so that it is unnecessary to develop every skill personally. Therefore many so-called illiterate adults see themselves as interdependent: they contribute a range of skills other than reading and writing to their networks. Some illiterate adults see themselves as having little to offer their networks. They are engaged in asymmetrical rather than reciprocal exchange relationships and may be viewed as dependant. While their lack of literacy skills contributes to this condition, it is not the cause.

Fingeret draws some interesting conclusions in her research:

> ... That present literacy programmes meet the needs of those illiterate adults who are willing and able to separate themselves from their social networks for a variety of reasons; that existing programme models require that students separate themselves from their communities; that as illiterate adults learn to read all their other network relationships must shift – their needs change and they have less time to respond to the needs of others.[24]

Her study also suggests that people enrolled in courses at times when their social network was already in flux for some reason, to do with children, work, change of locality or other changes.

Stephen Reder does work that is similar to Gee's around the notion of 'informal acquisition of literacy skills'. He develops a useful typology for three dimensions of literacy: the technology, the function and the social meaning. He sees an individual as being technologically engaged in a literacy practice when that person is directly engaged in coding/decoding written messages; and functionally engaged when participating in the practice without actually doing the above. In a context of shared skills he sees the literacy specialists as doing both, whereas others participate through their knowledge of the functionality of literacy.[25] The third dimension, social

meaning, relates to the complex network of social values and effective reactions associated with literacy practices. Following this line, Reder found that literacy practices were organised into domains of activities, such as church, school, work, governance, and so on. Distinct and often conflicting systems of social meanings are seen to develop for the use of writing in these domains. The social role of the literacy specialists in the church and in the schools were quite different, for example, as were the means by which literacy skills were taught or socialised by an agent to others. And these differences exerted a very profound influence on the choices individuals made about acquiring and then using (or not using) their literacy skills in certain settings.

His consideration of the practical implications of this perspective includes the observation that adult educational approaches fail to address the acquisition of literacy skills by adults outside of adult education programmes. He claims that once we consider adults' literacy development as a possible outcome of *informal acquisition* as well as formal instruction, additional research issues and development concerns start coming to mind, such as:

From what types of activities and social contexts do adults learn literacy skills?

To what extent could informal literacy *training* be 'embedded within the logic of everyday life'.

Literacy practices and discourse

Brian Street's concern over the traditional linking of literacy with rationality and scientific thought are illuminated by the above discussion of discourse. These conceptualisations of literacy, he has argued, can be shown to be representations themselves that work at the level of ideology to sustain and reproduce particular forms of literacy practice and particular sub-cultures in domination of others. He has argued that what are supposed to be the *effects* of literacy are no more than the *values*, as opposed to the attainments, of a Western, academic sub-culture. He has argued that our concept of literacy should not separate it from other modes of communication, that so-called literacy practices are always embedded in oral uses, and that variations in the *mix* of oral/literate channels and specific *'literacy practices'* are what should be our focus of study, rather than supporting a decontextualised, distorted and abstract notion of literacy, premised on narrow, culturally-specific values about what is proper literacy, with an emphasis on 'essay-text' uses of literacy and on literary prose.

He identifies four aspects of literacy ideology in contemporary educational practice:

1) The discussion of literacy within a discourse of rationality;
2) The notion of a single, reified literacy, as opposed to varieties of local literacies, vernaculars and indigenous practices;
3) The stigma attached to 'illiteracy', even in contexts where standard literacy is not necessary or functional; and
4) The reproduction of a 'pedagogised' variety of literacy as the standard.[26]

In the next section we examine how particular concepts of literacy have become sedimented within the discourses of major interest groups in South Africa. In Street's terms, we examine how a particular 'pedagogised' notion of literacy is articulated as part of wider social discourses relating to 'struggle against oppression', 'social reconstruction', 'development' and 'redress'.

PART TWO: MOBILIZATIONS OF DIFFERENT POTENTIALS IN LITERACY DISCOURSE IN SOUTH AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this part of the paper is to describe and analyse the significant shifts in the post-1990 public discourse of literacy/ABE in South Africa.

There are four parts to the argument:

- The political decisions of 1990 changed the narratives governing the production of literacy discourse/practice.
- Different institutionally-established interest groups mobilized different themes within the new narrative of social reconstruction – with different implications for policy and practice.
- The contestation in the discourse field will, over time, stabilize a set of proposals with direct effects on policy, investment and action.
- The universities have a particular role to play in the structuring of the new discourse.

THE IMPACT OF THE 1990 DECISIONS ON LITERACY DISCOURSES

Before 1990, the discourses of literacy were deeply embedded in the narrative of the struggle against apartheid. Parts of the narrative emphasized the plight of victims and the moral obligations to them; other parts stressed the necessity for the mobilization of the power of the repressed majority.

In this broad, historically-based narrative, literacy formed one specialist discourse among several others directed towards organizing resources and opportunities for black people.

All of these discourses shared a common matrix of concepts which stressed the needs of the dispossessed people; the moral and political obligations of services; the importance of volunteer social action and the value of dedication and commitment to overcoming the disastrous consequences of apartheid social policy.

The significance of this discourse matrix for work in literacy was that it stabilized a particular set of meanings for the key terms in the practice. Illiteracy was a fixed, given, condition of *need:* a state of being produced by bad social policy which deprived individuals of their rights to the skills and capacities necessary for social participation. Illiterate people were defined as suffering a comprehensive disqualification.

The counter term of literacy was constructed as an unqualified good which needed to be made available through concerted social action. Different strands of the discourse emphasized different forms of 'good' – one important theme stressed the good for the individual, providing him or her with the basic means of coping with a difficult and resistant reality. A second strand placed emphasis on the good of literacy for organized social activity – particularly work – the firm and the individual would benefit. A third, which became steadily more prominent during the 1980s, stressed the good value of literacy work in building a collective political movement. The progress from illiteracy was constructed as the movement from apathetic compliance to self- conscious revolutionary consciousness.

The polarization produced in the narrative between undifferentiated *need* and unquestionable *good* gave the position of the *literacy worker* a particularly high profile. The core emphasis was on morally inspired, volunteer social action, dedicated to work against severe constraints and difficulties towards a distant ideal.

This literacy discourse was stabilized over time by the constitutional provisions of apartheid, on the one hand, and the increasing involvement of donor groups committed to the broad political struggle on the other. In the middle to late 1980s the governing terms of the discourse had become so nearly axiomatic, that virtually any volunteer group able to demonstrate its capacity to deploy the terms of the narrative was guaranteed financial and 'diplomatic' support.

The political decisions of 1990 had the effect of transforming both the conceptual matrix and the specialist extensions of the literacy discourse, principally because they dislodged and then re-ordered the defining social narratives.

The decision of the government and its opposition to 'share power', under terms to be worked out in a new constitution, transformed the conceptual matrix of the social narrative as a whole. It removed the moral framework which had constructed 'good' and 'bad' practice, and it shifted the roles of all social actors. One way of expressing this, is to say that the decisions changed what had been the problems of the government into the problems of all social actors – volunteer or official. The counter-reality of the dispossessed victims of apartheid, or of the organized revolutionary forces (depending on what point of view one took) was dissolved as a separate focus of meaning and brought within the ambit of an overall social vision.

This fundamental move was made (as the Minister of Finance at the time recently expressed it) because:

> There would have come a time when the backlogs (i.e. unmet social costs) would have become so large as a result of the extremely large numbers of unemployed people, that there is no way any government could have governed this country. So we had to move politically, internally, to change the situation.[27]

The 1990 decisions effectively made all social actors responsible for dealing with the problems of 'the backlog – the unmet social costs' produced under apartheid.

The perspective forms the conceptual matrix of the new social narrative and provides the generative framework for the specialist social action discourses, of which literacy forms a part. (The others are land, work, urban residence, housing, schooling, health, welfare).

The matrix of 'unmet social costs' should not be read as a stable, technical, empirically verifiable scale of measurement. There is no social accounting system which operates objectively and independently of the interest perspectives of the wide range of social actors involved in trying to re-shape the social narrative.

This is particularly true in the South African context, given the transitional conditions affecting overall social authority. There is no one position (either illegitimate, government or 'legitimate' opposition) able to declare with authority what the unmet needs and their social costs are, nor how large they *are*, nor how they are to be met and over what time.

These, in fact, are the grounds of the contestation between different actors and different discourses. However, before proceeding towards an assessment of the different claims being put

forward within the literacy discourse, two further points regarding the shift in the discourse matrix as a whole need to be registered.

The first is that the opening of the question of 'unmet social costs' to general social evaluation (and action) raises a critical set of questions about the *nature* of the 'needs' which illiterates were presumed to experience. The 'needs' have neither changed nor disappeared but their evaluation has altered considerably since they are now seen in a 'total society' framework. The question has thus become focused on the specific forms of *social qualification/disqualification* that illiteracy represents – both to the illiterates themselves and to the social order in which they are now (theoretically at least) full participants.

Similarly, the question of the 'good' of literacy has been re-opened. It cannot be unproblematically construed as a personal, or technical, or political good as required by either a migrant, or an activist. The "good" that literacy represents requires re-evaluation as a personal *and* a social good. What it will do for illiterate people and for the society require reconsideration.

Perhaps even more significant is the impact of the change on the providers of literacy. The moral/political framework of givens which constructed the volunteer social action work has been re-ordered in terms of work in social policy, social planning and technical questions of delivery.

The literacy worker, therefore, has come under pressure (even in the NGO sector) to adopt the habits of thought of the socially accountable bureaucrat responsible for the best use of finite resources, for the production of the best available social good.

This is not to say that volunteer social action will, or has, disappeared. It is, however, to say that the volunteer action sector is not able, under the new construction, to claim access on its terms to 'public' or 'quasi-public' resources for its tasks – nor can it assert claims to represent the best public interest in the field. The volunteer sector has been moved toward the margins of potential social action.

THE FOCUS OF THE CHANGES IN DISCOURSE

The change in the conceptual matrix of the social action discourses described above, became, even before 1990, focused for public exchange in two core terms which encapsulated the new social narrative under construction. The first of these was *reconstruction;* the second *development.*

'Reconstruction' was the term deployed to represent the reordering of the political realm.

Reconstruction as a title implied the successful ending of the chapter of 'struggle' and the beginning of a new chapter. It thus managed the breach by constructing old enemies as allies and co-workers within a new broader historical perspective – thus valorizing any and all forms of compromise.

Development emerged as the title for the social action narrative directed towards the problems of 'unmet social costs'. The benevolent implication of the new narrative was that all previous evidence of social discrimination and inequality could be redefined as the consequence of impersonal forces beyond the control of social actors – and that all parties to the new political compromises could work in a common endeavour to deal with the effects of under-development.

THE PROGRESS OF THE DISCOURSES

The progress of the development discourse was first evident in the construction of common frameworks of purpose between the foreign donors (KAGISO/EC) and the local 'development funders' established by the state (IDT) and the private sector (UF, later JET).

More striking were the steps taken to forge a common discourse of development between the trade union movement and some parts of the private sector.

The process of negotiation between the government and the non-parliamentary opposition brought forward the most urgent demands of the majority for an equitable share in the goods of the society – demands which could only be met (symbolically at least) in the context of rapid economic and social development – or which, failing that, would generate a powerful drive aimed at destroying the existing structures completely.

'Development' rapidly became the key term of the dominant public policy discourse because it was (and still is) capable of holding together loose coalitions of very divergent interests within a broad, future-oriented perspective. Its formulation left room for dozens of different interpretations of how things were to be done, for whom, and by whom, but all of whom agreed that the work would be done in terms of stabilizing a broadly middle class, market-oriented, social authority underpinned by international economic and diplomatic support.

However, the development narrative was not able to secure the support of all the social actors which had been involved in the narrative of 'the struggle'. These groups produced a counter discourse of *redress*.

The redress discourse grew out of the long-term commitment of some of the NGOs, the churches and some foreign donors (HIVOS in particular) to the people who, in even the most optimistic developmental scenario, were unlikely to be able to participate in any new distribution of social goods. The most obvious of these groups were the rural poor and the marginal urban groups which would find it difficult, if not impossible, to assert their claims for a share in a new dispensation.

FORMULATIONS OF THE MAIN INSTITUTIONAL INTEREST GROUPS

The existing state

The state accepts that illiteracy is an unmet social cost, but it continues to regard the cost to itself as low, and its educational proposals leave it at the margins of the general strategy. The issue is down-graded from state attention to the market itself, where the state hopes the private sector, non-formal NGO work and the public media will interest themselves in it.

The state proposals employ a narrow interpretation of the development discourse. The focus is on schooling at the primary level and on the reconstruction of the formal system.

The organized private sector

The *organized* private sector has an ambiguous relation to the development discourse. At the level of public discussion and presentation, the private sector has worked to prepare a National Training Strategy which incorporates proposals for literacy work within a training system. There is a commitment to competency-based programmes and to accreditation across industries. However, a critical point in the strategy is that it should remain voluntary, and should be

state supported rather than state regulated. The strategy is to provide direction and support rather than prescription. The private sector is thus both a protagonist and an exploiter of 'development'.

The focus of the NTS is the private sector interest in securing trainable and/or trained labour. In this sense it is narrow in focus. It defines literacy (and training) in terms of labour market 'needs' as seen from the perspective of employers. In terms of provision, it has little to say regarding texts, or pedagogies or acquisition, leaving these largely in the hands of the National Training Board and its local Industry Training Boards, together with an explicit recommendation of the curriculum skills of PRISEC (Private Sector Education Council).

On the decisive issue of authority, however, the NTS is unambiguous. Literacy and training are to be understood as commodities to be accumulated by trainees for exchange on the labour market. Equally unambiguous is the NTS definition of the conditions of control in the labour market. It is seen as a 'private' 'voluntary' market. Control of the market therefore rests with the purchaser – the highest bidder. The purpose of the NTS can be seen as upgrading the quality of the product on offer in the market.

In terms of the progress of literacy it might be said that the NTS is designed as an employer-centred 'colonization' programme, by means of which the illiterate will slowly be drawn into market relationships on terms set by the *organized* private sector. It seems reasonable to add that this perspective is produced by a characteristically short-term interpretation of the private sector's role in 'development'" – in particular, that developmental processes in the society as a whole must be seen and judged as serving, not only the long-term interests of the private sector in stability and growth, but in its interest in short-term profit as well. It would like the social costs to be met by others, in ways that will provide benefits for itself.

The COSATU plan

The comprehensive plan for educator/training and employment (including literacy/ABE) produced by the COSATU unions (NUMSA in particular) must be judged as the most powerful and comprehensive mobilization of the 'developmental' discourse. Its basic propositions for a modular, integrated, systemically articulated, national system of competency-based training and education are well known and will not be detailed here.

Instead, the focus will be placed on the particular kind of mobilization of the development discourse that these proposals represent.

In the COSATU context, the proposals accept and endorse the commodification of literacy/ABE, but on terms different to those proposed by the Organized private sector.

COSATU's conception of the market in skills and competencies differs from the private sector (and the state) in the essential respect that it envisages a market operating under the terms of a formally agreed (and state enforced) *regulation*. The market, in the COSATU vision, is a rule-governed operational space, in which workers will be encouraged to accumulate the qualifications necessary to validate their claims for status and authority.

Literacy is therefore seen as a commodity – as something to be exchanged on a market, but not one controlled only by supply, demand and the vested power of capital.

The most powerful aspect of the COSATU mobilization lies in its drawing together of two disparate themes in literacy and the fusing of the two within the developmental discourse.

It accepts the state/private sector argument for the necessity of trained, skilled labour and it fuses that with a developmental vision of the social advance of the working class.

In specific terms, the COSATU proposals have little to say about texts or detailed pedagogy, but they are emphatic on the forms of acquisition and the authority under which they should take place. Modular units of learning/acquisition are cross-referenced with formal education and the industrial training system, and the whole system operates under the authority of the state which will guarantee the validity of the achievement of each modular unit. Literacy is for mobility and for the restructuring of the available resources of the market in skills.

COSATU sees its education/training plan as an essential part of the bid to reorganize the South African economy from a low-skill/participation model to the opposite, high-skill/participation model. This, they believe, will not only produce the growth required in the economy, but will ensure the social progress of the working class.

NGOs and 'development'

The third interest group working with the discourses of literacy can be defined as the NGO sector. Care must be taken, however, to distinguish the 'developmental' aspect of the NGO position and that part given over to the counter discourse of 'redress'. Both are features of NGO discussion and frequently cut across each other in unexpected ways.

NGOs encountered the developmental discourse from two different directions. The first expression came from leaders of the mass democratic movement with which they had affiliated themselves. From this source, the new injunctions were against revolutionary 'excess' and in favour of the development of 'the capacity to govern'.

The second came from the donor organizations who began to speak of the need to deliver goods and services on a scale 'appropriate to the problem'. Political identification could no longer be considered sufficient (or even necessary) and in its place came requirements to expand and to provide measurable product outcomes.

In response to these mobilizations of meaning, the NGO sector produced a set of ambiguous responses. In terms of the 'developmental' side of the ambiguity they successfully appropriated several features of the COSATU proposals and showed a preparedness to entertain conceptions of modularized competency-based adult basic education, with a view to articulating their own provision within a nationally regulated system. On this basis, several NGOs shifted their (implicit or explicit) revolutionary objectives towards 'equality of opportunity' within a market system and called on their donor patrons for appropriate support on the basis of the change.

These changes in the institutional relations of the NGOs had their corresponding changes in the details of text, pedagogy and curriculum. In place of Freirean conscientization for revolutionary liberation, the new approach produced the texts of 'education for democracy' and a pedagogy of modular training in a curriculum of accumulating credits.

NGOs and 'Redress'

But the 'developmental' response of the NGO's was counter-balanced by a less overt, but still powerful, attachment to the discourse of political rights and to 'social redress'.

This second attachment was made most evident through the critical issue of the institutional authority of the NGO. No NGO has, despite the power of the developmental discourse, aban-

doned its autonomy or identity as a separate authoritative entity, in order to work as an integral institutional component of a 'developmental' programme.

Institutional autonomy has meant that NGOs have reserved and maintained the right to declare the meaning of the acquisition of literacy – to provide the authoritative reading of 'the text'. In this stance the NGOs have struggled to sustain and carry forward their *independent* relations with their learners – not as before, on the basis of revolutionary authority, but on the basis of liberal concepts of equality and redress for past wrongs. The justificatory arguments for such a position rest ultimately in political and juridical (not to mention religious) views of historical dispossession. In this stance, they frequently have the support of church bodies.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE MOBILIZATIONS

The preceding argument of this section has focused on the ways in which the political decisions of 1990 transformed, firstly, the generative terms of literacy discourses and, secondly, how the principal social agencies participating in the discourse shaped it to meet their purposes, visions, and interests.

In the final part of this section of the paper, we bring some of the critical perspectives developed in the 'new literacy studies' to bear on the dominant discourse as it has developed in South Africa since 1990.

The questions emerge out of the fundamental strategy of the new literacy studies – which is to turn the focus of attention and enquiry away from the discourses and practices of the planners, to the putatively illiterate learners. It is through this research-directed move, that the recent work has been able to break open the closed systems of conventional thinking about literacy work.

It is common cause among all participants in the SA literacy discourse that there are some 15 million illiterate and semi-literate people. It is also freely granted in all discussions that this is a highly unstable estimate, and further, that no one has established what illiteracy means – except that it may correlate in some way with the absence of schooling for five years.

We are not in a position to pose a realistic and effective challenge to either the definition of illiteracy as the absence of schooling – or to the figure of 15 million people; but we are, as academics in a position to say that full-scale and detailed action planning by social agencies should not take place until there is considerably more clarity on the real nature and the real scale of the problem.

We are not saying that nothing should be done without adequate knowledge – in broad terms we accept the basic grounding of the development discourse – but we are saying that the form of planning and the scale of investment should take account of the fact that we do not know either what the problem is or what the scale of it is.

The next set of questions arise out of the very obviously *symbolic character* of both the discourse itself, and the plans and proposals which it generates. At the heart of the constructions of all the major participants is a powerfully symbolic construction of the relationship between reading and writing and social transformations of one kind or another – whether individual mobility and access to social power, or of the securing of political rights and personal empowerment. We take the view that these symbolic conceptions of the literacy/society relationship rest largely on the uninspected assumptions of the displaced discourse of 'needs'.

Here again, we think it is necessary, in the light of recent research work, to raise questions about the relationship which both the developmental and the redress discourses assume between

the planned, organized teaching of reading and writing, and the social goals which they seek to promote.

It is significant of the symbolic problem, that the scale of existing formal literacy work is both very small and very ineffective, even in terms of its own goals – and perhaps equally significant that the generators of the grandest plans do no formal (or informal) work in literacy at all.

The third set of questions focus on the *programmatic assumptions* which the new discourse makes. These can be briefly characterized as an untested and unargued constellation of views of the likely behaviours of defined illiterate people. At the core of the constellation is the view that any persons who know themselves to be 'illiterate' or who experience problems with scholastic text-based literacy will, as a matter of urgent necessity, respond positively to the provision of some form of planned and delivered literacy training. Thus it is assumed that investment in the provision of literacy training will produce directly proportional, measurable results in improved literacy capacity in the population as a whole.

Much evidence from literacy programmes both local and international – including campaigns – points in the opposite direction, though the reasons why supposedly illiterate people do not make use of available provision in the way and for the purposes that planners expect, remains unclear.

Once more, we are not saying that nothing should be done: we are at this point simply noting that current literacy discourses, as mobilized by local interest groups, make no allowance for the fact that 'illiterates' may be busy with other more interesting or more pleasurable things.

Finally, we are concerned that the symbolic, even mythically redemptive promises carried in the discourse, through the direct relating of a textual pedagogy to a swiftly produced positive social outcome, may prove to be drastically misleading to both illiterates and planners alike.

If these promises are allowed to proceed unchecked and untested from visionary discourse to planning and implementation, we think they are likely to fail, and to bring in their wake a generalized despair about the prospects for a fully literate population – and for literacy work itself.

We are most anxious not to be seen as attempting to cut off and defeat the attempt to construct effective literacy practices – in either pedagogic or naturalized forms – but given the character of the discourse, we feel that caution is called for.

It is in this general framework of questions deriving from critical study that we think the Universities have a crucial role to play.

PART THREE:
SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The above account has analysed the nature and assessed the force of two frames crucial in our view to providing the terms that university work in the adult basic education/literacy field in South Africa has to engage with – the generative grounds and current policy articulations of local literacy discourses, and the critical perspectives of international academic work known as 'the new literacy studies'.

In order to proceed to an argument of what would constitute an adequate university engagement with these terms, it will be necessary to analyse and assess South African universities' own location and implication in the processes of discursive development of ABE/literacy practice and policy. This will be attempted in three stages. The first step will be to construct a frame for looking at the ways in which universities impact social development, especially in areas of public policy. The second, will be to employ this frame to give an account of university work in adult and adult basic education before 1990, concentrating particularly on conditions in the eighties. The third, will be to weigh the capacities generated by the eighties against the demands constructed by the changed political conditions of the nineties.

This section of the paper differs from the previous in narrowing of focus and in narrative form through it introducing actors into the account. These actors begin by being South African universities as institutions, but become particularised as those academics with a formal responsibility for adult education and ABE – Departments or Centres of Adult Education or 'university-based adult educators'. At a certain point in the account of their work it becomes appropriate for the writers to admit membership of this group and use the word 'we'.

THREE MODES OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE

The action of universities in the political economy and in cultural development – in the stabilizing and destabilizing of discourse and practice – is both complex and contradictory, given their range of social locations and traditions, and given the inertia of educational institutions in processes of social change. Nevertheless, there are arguably three ways in which universities can be seen as impacting on and participating in the mobilization of discourse and practice in areas of public policy:

- By formal-institutional means;
- By informal consultative means; and
- By public intellectual means.

'Formal-institutional means' (which we shall refer to as 'mode 1') refers to the substantial formalizing role universities play in a wide range of social fields, through the construction of knowledge and the processing of entry to the professional classes. What is involved here is the university's capacity to structure and stabilize a segment of social practice, by controlling what counts as appropriate knowledge, and how assessment and accreditation procedures are to be employed in the framing of professional roles and identities – usually in association with professional associations. In this way, universities have 'recognized' an ever-widening range of fields

of practice – medicine, engineering, teaching, social work, nursing – and at a very early stage in this process – adult education. This professionalizing process is itself a particular form of sponsored social development: the interests of the practitioners are extended and rationalized through bureaucratic means, including mechanisms for professional protection and for public accountability. Accompanying this process is an inevitable hierarchical structuring of the field of practice, corresponding to formal levels of educational attainment and expertise. This bureaucratizing role of universities in social development is one that takes place on a national and international scale. Its momentum is ponderous.

The development of social practices through 'informal consultative means' (mode 2) does not, by contrast, draw on the formal processing and accrediting capacity of the university. What the university does is simply provide a background of legitimacy and expertise to academics, as individuals or groups, to respond to and operate within the structures of other institutions or agencies. Here the academic acts as consultant in the market place, whether as expert with specific and limited input or as 'organic intellectual' committed to furthering the goals and values of some institution other than his or her university – a state department, a political party, a public corporation, a trade union or a community organization. The impact of such an academic may be on policy formation, strategic choice or institutional culture. The resource he or she brings into play is that of knowledge and expertise – and its selective mobilization in a competitive social milieu. Intellectual capacity and skill becomes an element of production for the consulting organization.

Impact on social policy by 'public intellectual means' – the third mode of influence – captures the idealized role of the university intellectual as a free-standing, critical agent of civil society, making direct insertions into public affairs through analysis, critique and advocacy on public issues. Media and public forums are crucial in this process of influence. Such engagement may mesh closely with current political issues and employ ephemeral media – newspapers, television and colloquia; or work at a level of theory beneath current issues of policy and employ slower means of discursive penetration – research reports, monographs and books. This is the domain of operation in which claims to university autonomy are characteristically grounded, and in which the university operates most explicitly in its authorizing capacity – the production of expert witness and academically grounded judgement and interpretation – in short, authoritative text. Such work serves to construct the debate that shifts the curricula operating in formal-institutional mode.

Significant at this level of influence in the South African context has been the tradition of critical dissent – liberal and radical – fostered at certain South African universities and important both in its moral and intellectual erosion of apartheid structures and state hegemony, and in its ideological support to a wide range of agencies within the liberation movement – political organizations, unions and community organizations in particular.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE EIGHTIES

When the abstracted picture of three ways in which universities may impact social development is put to use to structure an account of university engagement up to 1990 in the discourse and practice of adult basic education in this country, a number of generalizations are possible.

Formal Institutional Mode

Neither adult education in general nor ABE in particular has been a site of social practice amenable to the formalizing and professionalizing agenda of the university – for obvious reasons. Adult education has been a site of social practice unrecognized by the state in policy terms, legal and fiscal. Apartheid state policy saw no reason to classify adult education as a social investment, and it has therefore occupied no place in social service delivery, in contrast to schooling and health services. (Pre-school education has fared only slightly better and displays instability and fragility as a delivery site of public policy). Adult education, notwithstanding minimal DET investment and extensive skill-based development within the industrial sector, has been and remains a field of public social intervention waiting in the wings.

Operating in mode 1, universities are essentially reactive institutions, requiring the enabling conditions of national policy intervention, including legal and financial preconditions, to enable the formalizing process to take place on any scale. Securing adequate policy terms for positive state intervention and financial support has up to now been unsuccessful. Two examples of failure will suffice.

The only state attempts to structure and develop general adult education provision, the 1981 De Lange proposals for non-formal adult education, received too limited a sponsorship, no financial provision, and rested on a dummy political settlement. They were overtaken by the most radical contestation of education in our history, when the People's Education movement of the 1980s gave a social transformation agenda to non-formal education, in contrast to De Lange's reformist one that saw non-formal as complementary to formal education.

University attempts to secure state subsidy for adult education development were also unsuccessful throughout the eighties. And such attempts as there were indicated the impossibility of any coherent national vision of university work in the field. Publicly directed university continuing education languished, while professional continuing education and the privatization of university resources in pursuit of state and industrial contracts proliferated. Only in a very few universities was limited scale investment made in professional programmes for educating the educators of adults.

The general point to be made, then, is that adult education and adult basic education have remained exempt from the mainstreaming function of South African universities. From a mode 1 perspective, they have remained unsuitable sites for formal development – under-developed, sub-professional, volunteer and charity-based, with no subject or discipline worthy of a university, the terrain of community activism, and with no sponsoring institutions to compensate for any of the above conditions. Adult education simply has not made the grade.

Within and in spite of this broader picture, UCT, Wits, the University of Natal and the University of the Western Cape engaged in small-scale and ambiguous professionalization of the field. Chairs were established at three of these universities – themselves ambiguous constructions – and these universities began consciously and unconsciously about their traditional structuring of a field of practice.

The ambiguity of these initiatives rested on the variety of available understandings attached to them. Clearly such moves were anticipatory: they were small-scale preparation for future professionalization of the field. At the same time, none of the above initiatives took place within the traditional structures of university faculties of education, or as extensions of established

teacher education programmes: they were institutionally separate developments generated by trajectories that were essentially non-formal, in particular public university extra-mural work (at the Universities of Cape Town, Wits and Natal) and community-directed service work (at the University of the Western Cape). The new departments or centres were located structurally on the margins of the university, in community interface positions.

At the same time, a major part of the work of these new departments or centers was the organization and development of a range of projects, particularly in forms of community education. It is within the context of such projects that ABE eventually finds a toe-hold as a university-based programme, at UCT in 1986 and the University of Natal in 1988.

As seen from a central university perspective, the entire university-based adult education endeavour has been and largely remains in project mode, within which ABE itself has very recently achieved sub-project status. In this view, the university-based adult education project is an important form of community-university interface, holding significant symbolic capital for the university, having important public relations and donor benefits, and playing a minor role in responsive adjustments to the university curriculum.

As far as students are concerned, those who did enter the formal parts (i.e. the diploma course) of the university-based adult education 'project', these are themselves 'project workers' throughout the eighties – very largely members of the upper echelons of progressive community organizations. Professional adult education programmes attract maverick educators, ones who do not fit the formal frames available, and are seeking alternative understandings of practice and of social identity as educators. This could hardly be seen as mainstream professionalizing work.

Informal consultative mode

We turn now to the university in its second mode of operation – the informal consultative mode.

While traditional Afrikaans-medium universities were substantially insulated against the calls and pressure of the liberation movement in the eighties, the position of the traditionally open universities was more complex and ambiguous. Structurally, universities could be seen as having no contribution to make to a counter-culture of mass mobilization and organization for social transformation. In their bureaucratic functions it was business as usual for these universities – in common with others – though the business was more anxiously conducted, more prone to boycott and protest of policy and action offensive to the struggle, and accompanied by an increasingly serious engagement in academic support and admission policy, and the development of affirmative action practices.

In their informal consultative function, however, the situation was very different. The irrelevance of the university as formal structure to the liberation struggle, the harsh state repression of the liberation movement and the international academic boycott, highlighted the conservative and reproductive functions of South African universities. University intellectuals responded to this crisis of institutional legitimacy in two ways: private alliances with and engagements in sectors of the popular movement, and organizational initiatives within the university, usually on its fringes, to mediate resources to organizations of the movement.

Such initiatives took a variety of forms: resource centres, university extension projects and programmes, education policy units, non-formal training programmes and ways of popularizing

academic work through new forms of media development. The common thrust was the need to mediate university resources within newly constructed sites of political and cultural relevance; the social gains were the repossession of ideological authority and a renewed sense of short-term political relevance. Many such university-based agencies drew members of the 'community' into contract posts, and attempted to conduct themselves as community organizations with the university as their 'site' of work rather than their organizational home. And there was pressure on certain university departments, especially in education and social service fields, to resemble community organizations as far as possible in their form of democratic organization and accountability.

It was these conditions of the eighties that drew into play university-based adult educators in 'informal consultative mode'. And they were ideally placed to respond to them.

Radical adult education discourse provided the narrative of the struggle with the positive terms of the educational contestation between people and state: non-formal, empowering, popular, democratic, conscientizing, counter-hegemonic, etc.. University-based adult educators found their field of practice authorized by the struggle – as alternative education with the capacity for social transformation. They operated with considerable comfort and legitimacy in the project world of small organizations, with a field of practice somewhere between educational and organizational work – a field that maximized their process and strategic skills while minimizing their epistemological and theoretical limitations. And such engagement ensured the flow of donor funding into university departments of adult education, providing the terms for the expansion of their staff and material resources. They were resourced through demonstrated distance from the university and affiliation with the movement.

Our work in the eighties, then, was dominated by social conditions that did not simply favour the informal consultative mode of social intervention; they pushed this mode of operation to its limits. This made a number of achievements possible while setting extreme limitations on others. One such limitation was on the operation of university-based adult educators in the third mode of social influence – the 'public intellectual mode'.

Public-intellectual mode

The near extinction of public discursive space through the eighties should not mask the possibility of university engagement in fundamental theoretical work on educational development, addressing a medium-term future rather than an immediate present. There was little or no such intellectual work – a poverty of tradition exposed at the Kenton Conference at Salt Rock in 1986, as well as later when the NECC's National Educational Policy Investigation required adult educators to think in national policy mode about options grounded in social analysis.

Probably throughout the eighties a thread of papers can be traced in which such work is attempted and thwarted by the immediacy of the issues and contexts that contain it. The work is half-hearted, ungrounded in intellectual project and commitment and, above all, unsustained by any coherent research programme within or across universities. Attempts to construct such programmes fail. Indeed, educational research in general collapses as a coherent intellectual pursuit, probably except in the field of historical work, with a rise of 'action research', 'case studies' and 'project evaluation' prioritizing experience and engagement, valorizing the

theory-making nature of the project world and extending the process of academic affiliation described earlier.

However, in the case of mainstream work in education, particularly schooling, research as political and cultural critique, particularly that grounded in historical analysis, continues to enact an established intellectual tradition. This programme of intellectual critique directed at the deconstruction of state discourse and policy is absent in the adult education sector; critique expresses itself in the immediacy of aligned participatory action.

It is difficult for university-based adult educators now to conceive of a programme of intellectual work driven by basic theoretical questions that is itself a major contribution to social reconstruction. We have been over-prepared by the eighties for a role of service to the field.

Taking stock

Where then, to sum up, have the particular forms of social engagement throughout the eighties left us?

Contribution to the reconstruction of educational practice through the formalizing and professionalizing functions of the university has been small-scale, anticipatory and ambivalent, despite excellent innovative programmes. The ambivalence is to be seen in a reluctance to use the university system to construct a hierarchy of professional qualifications for adult educators and in the project nature of innovative programmes for the field. (This is not unrelated to conditions for obtaining donor funding). It is also seen in problems with what is to count as foundations of professional practice in adult education – the absence of a canon and the absence of terms for its construction. And it is seen in the avoidance up to now of issues of scale.

In informal consultancy mode, university-based adult educators are vastly experienced and competent to expand terrains of influence. Current donor policy encourages and resources a new phase of consultancy practices directed at national and regional co-operation and rationalization. The presence of ABE on national political and economic agendas constructs new clients to greatly expanded networks – national and international foundations and donors, industrial agencies, unions, state and anticipatory state bodies – all with substantial resources to construct 'private work' for university academics. These constitute powerful conditions for the privatization of university departments of adult education, and for the rewarding and maintenance of the capacities generated by the eighties.

As concerns our capacity, by contrast, to contribute to social and educational reconstruction through basic theoretical work, the present position seems bleak. Recent tests of this capacity show the absence of any new critical theoretical stance on our own social practice and our own shaping as university adult educators, or any fresh grip of the social conditions that both determine and challenge such practice. Instead, it has been work of extension, elaboration and justification of old trajectories and moral quests, even if applied to new sites of need or clientele; and of technological refinement and sophistication of craft and curriculum practice.

What we produce when we are pressed into academic mode is practice-generated theorizing – competent and sophisticated but solipsistic. For such work no vantage point on oneself as social actor is possible – one writes from within the givenness of one's own project – one remains an activist. And one perceives and finds the social world to work in that one needs.

DEMANDS OF THE NINETIES

If this assessment of the position of university-based adult educators is even reasonably accurate, then the demands placed upon us by the dramatically changed conditions of the 1990s are particularly taxing ones – and they reach us with particular force in the area of adult basic education. They are demands that address themselves precisely to our points of weakness – the formal and institutional structuring of professional practice and the production of intellectual work incisive enough to provide moral and intellectual grounding for this practice, and to impact the construction of public policy.

It is the latter demand that, in our view, contains the real test of university capacity and responsibility. It is necessary to renew the range of requirements of this demand as identified in section two:

- Turning the focus of attention from solution to problem;
- Deconstructing the mythological character of literacy discourse and practice;
- Examining programmatic assumptions, especially relations between provision and need; and
- Testing the capacity of 'literacy' to deliver swiftly social outcomes.

The account of university-based adult education work in the eighties indicates the difficulties this task faces. First, universities have not simply shared in maintaining the mythological character of the ABE/literacy discourse, they have been major beneficiaries of this process. Second, they have co-operated through their espousal of progressive practices and methodologies to the very programmatic assumptions that short-circuit understanding of relations between need and provision. Third, they have no tradition of ethnographic research to draw on that could prioritize the practices of learners against the plans of practitioners.

The task then is the demythologizing of literacy discourse – a project of study and reinterpretation, closely grounded in sites of social practice, that inserts itself between utopian vision on the one hand, and plan and programme on the other.

This is a new and difficult way to be part of the solution, by reconceptualization of the problem, but it is a task that only universities have the institutional mission and the theoretical resources to undertake, potential as both still may be.

Furthermore, this is the work on which the authority of university-based adult educators rests – the capacity to authorize practice not simply through affiliation or through certification or through service – important as these may be – but through the generation of truth claims about the nature of the work we claim to undertake.

There are many tasks for different agencies enacting adult education as a narrative of development and redress in the emerging South Africa, and universities will serve this collective enterprise best by identifying those specific tasks that is their particular and unique responsibility. What the new conditions of the nineties offer the universities are a fresh opportunity to demonstrate their relevance to the construction of ABE/literacy policy and practice.

We see this work as a necessary but by no means sufficient task for universities. With it go obligations to resource the field of practice through the development and provision of structured professional programmes, as well as to play a co-operative role in the development of a national system of adult education provision.

Universities have to operate effectively in all three modes to meet the demands of the nineties. In mode 1, the task is to participate with other institutions in the professionalizing of

the field of practice by formal teaching, training and qualification. In mode 2, the task is to participate in the structuring and institutionalizing of an effective national system of ABE, in all its inter-related facets. But the foundational responsibility lies in mode 3. We turn to the programme of action required in the final section.

PART FOUR: TOWARDS A PROGRAMME

The preceding three sections of this paper have set the terms for a programme of university work.

The *first section* draws from the international literature to develop an orientation to research in literacy. The 'new literacy studies' provide a start for this work. They have shown how unstable the term 'literacy' is, and how overburdened by social expectations. They underline the extent to which prevailing assumptions of a singular and socially powerful technology are so inappropriate for constructing practice and research. The concepts of *multiple literacies*, of *literacy practices*, of *secondary discourses* and of *informal acquisition* and *formal learning* provide some of the concepts around which further research can be developed.

The *second edition* examines the mobilisation in South Africa of specific understandings of literacy and 'social needs' associated with the term. These include its articulation (and subordination) to the moral/political oppositional discourses of struggle against apartheid prior to 1990, and its re-articulation since then, with the social policy/planning concerns of *reconstruction, development*, as well as *redress*. The discussion traces the politically interested nature of these shifts, but argues that in all cases a strong and ungrounded conception of literacy as a potent social good, and as a fixed given need, is assumed.

At the heart of the formulations of the major institutional interest groups in adult literacy (including the state, the organised private sector, COSATU and the NGOs) lie sweeping assumptions about illiteracy as a social ill, and equally problematic assumptions about the likely social demand for literacy access on the part of adults.

The *third section* traces the development of adult education and literacy studies at universities in South Africa, concentrating on the Universities of Cape Town, Wits, Natal and the Western Cape. It outlines the capacities generated for work in these fields under the conditions of the '80s as against the demands of the '90s. Three major dimensions of the role of universities in adult education and literacy are presented:

- The professionalising of the field through *formal institutional means* provides both professional protection and channels for accountability to the public. Up to now, the universities have hardly contributed at all in this regard. The field of adult literacy provision remains unprofessionalised.
- The work of individuals and groups of academics in *informal consultative* mode has been considerable in the past, through individual consultation with anti-apartheid groupings, and through organisational engagements on the fringes of the university, in resource centres and donor-funded service agencies.

  In the '90s, widespread focus on social policy concerns, development and reconstruction have led to further demands for 'private work', drawing on the capacities generated in the '80s.

- The third mode, that of impacting on social policy by *public intellectual means*, through theoretical engagement and the development of conceptual understanding of the field, has been most undeveloped in the field of literacy in South Africa. Such work was difficult under the politically charged conditions of the 80s but is most in need of attention now.

DEVELOPING A PROGRAMME OF WORK

This last section puts forward, in broad outline, a programme for further university-based work.

A clear conclusion to be drawn from the paper thus far, is that the leading edge of serious university work needs to be the institutionalised engagement in detailed research for purposes of informing social policy and work in the field. Particularly, the arguments of the 'new literacy studies', as well as our own claims, that the social demand for adult literacy provision is limited, need to be tested. The universities' research capacities need to be developed and brought to bear on the developing of deeper understandings of literacy in its social context. Particularly, the question of what the likely behaviour of 'illiterate' people will be, faced with efforts to mobilise them on to adult education programmes, needs to be researched. The reasons why adults don't, and do make use of provision, needs uncovering, with the aid of the conceptual resources we have briefly outlined. Such research will have impact on decisions about where and what the forms of delivery should be. There is presently a substantial concern as to the appropriate site/s for delivery of education, with the state and NGOs being the major contenders. In the IDT-commissioned paper, we put forward the technical colleges as potentially important bases for delivery. The viability of these various directions need to be assessed from a point that starts from beyond conjecture or organisational self-interest. This basis can only be delivered by research of a sort which has not yet been developed in the literacy field in South Africa. In addition, that research will provide the conceptual platform for training in the field.

Such a prioritisation of work will not be easy. First, there are pressures for other forms of engagement to take priority. Operating with what we have presented as being problematic notions of literacy, social need and pedagogic delivery, wider social institutions, including donor agencies, the organised private sector, political parties and the trade union movement, will expect university involvement in the push for quick delivery. Formalising moves through training and certification are being proposed already by some institutions. Similarly, individual consultative work and commissioned work will be demanded. While these aspects of work will need to be seriously pursued, the universities will fail to make a serious contribution unless they give the theoretical and research grounding of this work due weight.

Secondly, such sustained research work is harder, and its usefulness will not always be obvious to all. The value of this work needs to be strongly stated therefore. The danger of setting up an institutionalised adult basic education system that is grounded on wrong assumptions about social demand for, social need for, and social impact of literacy, provides the motivation for taking this work seriously.

We set out the following as a starting point for constructing this work:

There are two broad research strands to follow: – a programmed development of research and understandings of the *social uses of literacy*, on the one hand, and concerns with *educational development* on the other, that addresses medium- and long-term rather than immediate requirements.

The social uses of literacy research will need to be varied, organised and sustained.

On the one hand, there is the major question about what community, or local, uses of literacy are. On the other hand, there is the question of the rating given by people to formal education, and the possibly high value given to school-type literacy. The preliminary evidence is that the demand for adequate education for children is not accompanied by the demand for adult education. Is this because the demand for education is primarily one about social access, not about individual functioning or performance? What are local perceptions of literacy and education? International research is only starting to tap rich ethnographic sources of information here. The limited research elsewhere has, for example, given contradictory findings. It is not clear how universal findings are that middle-class literacy practices are very close to school literacy. Such assumptions certainly cannot be made automatically in the South African context. Gee's concept of literacy acquisition as being the acquisition of a 'secondary discourse' provides a conceptual frame for exploring in the South African context, the distance between primary and socially valued secondary discourses, and the cognitive distance between the two.

Such a starting point could provide help with the following concerns: What are the local literacy practices within specific sites or sectors of South African society? What is the mix of oral and literate practices in local literacies? How are literacy skills used, shared or exploited, within family, work and neighbourhood settings, amongt settled urban working people, recently rural and migrant people, in squatter settlements and hostels, and across particular categories, such as the unemployed, women and people and groups engaged in productive work in the 'informal sector'? What are the similarities, differences, contingent points with 'mainstream' or dominant literacy practices? What are the wider discursive social practices within which particular local or sector uses are embedded?

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Answers to the above questions will need to be brought to bear on concerns with provision of adult education and pedagogy.

What are the pedagogical implications of such findings? What are the educational possibilities for linking literacy education with social practices, where literacy is about acquisition, not learning? What bearing does the research have on plans for the construction of adult literacy and basic education delivery systems? What would plans for competency-based delivery make of these findings? Such work would provide a more solid grounding for discussions about literacy provision, which now operate with reference to the unknown learner, a composite creature of deficit and discomfort, or else to those constructed identities that the small numbers of 'adult learners' assume within that disaggregated institution called the learning group.

Particularly lacking currently, and difficult to develop under the circumstances, is a tradition of ethnographic research. All theorising about literacy neeeds and uses in the South African context is hypothetical at this time.

The development of a substantial tradition of ethnographic research across varied communities would be a major achievement. A programme of training researchers whose language is the same as the community would be the first priority. Hardest of all will be to deliver research which does not sustain a postivist, one-dimensional notion of literacy. The ethno-

graphic frame will not of itself prevent that from happening, so engagement with theory will need to accompany research.

Research will have to resist pressures for delivery of immediately usable findings for educational practice – there will of necessity be a non-pedagogic focus to much of the ethnographic research. The educational implications will need to emerge as a secondary outcome, or else the research would be overwhelmed by the pedagogic focus. In other words, the research cannot be driven by concerns which anticipate the outcomes. The initial framing of research could also consider the following:

There are seperate dimensions to the questions of community *use* and *valuing* of literacy. *Valuing* of literacy will most likely be in terms of the 'standard' literacy, because of its links with access and accreditation; local *uses*, or non-uses, of literacy will be more or less compatible with school literacy. The links and connections are what is important and can be revealed through research.

ORGANIZING THE WORK

The conceptual and practical range of the research work proposed in the preceding discussion is daunting. No university department of adult education has the capacity to establish a programme remotely commensurate with the task.

As a consequence, the first moves to be made in organizing the work need to be directed towards the construction of 'resources' – broadly understood – and here there are several positive conditions which can provide support for the programme.

Proposal 1: Creating a research index

On the basis of general reading and public intellectual exchange, we think that there already is a fairly considerable body of research work done in South Africa which can generate at least some partial answers to the questions we have raised about literacy. Most of this work would not classify itself as about literacy itself – certainly not about the pedagogic aspects of literacy – but its concerns with the *social uses* and social *valuations* of a variety of 'cultural' practices, places it fairly close to the kinds of concerns we have identified.

In current academic definitions, much of this work can be found under such classifications as oral history, anthropology, applied linguistics, cultural studies and psychology.

What is required is a research index which cross-references the existing research work of this kind against the kind of interest in literacy that we have described. Such an index would make it possible to develop a cross-disciplinary reading programme for research work in literacy. The value of such an intellectual stock of South African research is not difficult to see. Not only would it provide a local vocabulary of social uses and valuations, it would also serve to sharpen the focus of the questions for local field-researchers.

Our first proposal, therefore, is for a four-month programme of library research to be undertaken by a researcher familiar with the general interdisciplinary field and prepared by the questions surrounding the social uses of literacy.

The product would be an annotated index which located the research books/papers/articles of the interdisciplinary field against the core concerns of the new literacy studies.

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Proposal 2: An interdisciplinary programme

The second proposal is also concerned with accumulating resources for the work from outside the narrow confines of 'adult education'. What is involved is a means of putting 'literacy' on to the research agendas of the contiguous disciplines.

We take the view that, for a variety of very good intellectual reasons, the questions about the social uses of language, which we see at the heart of the new literacy studies, also impinge on the current research interests of a number of disciplines. At the same time, researchers in these disciplines are understandably reticent about coming forward to speak directly on issues of literacy since the field is felt to be contentious and intensely supervised. We think this situation can be fairly easily changed in ways that will make it attractive for researchers in other disciplines to link their work with literacy issues.

The proposal, therefore, is that this present paper be used as a 'quarry' for a series of more specifically developed and focused discussions of the current position of literacy studies. These should be more directly addressed to researchers in particular fields, and should be formally presented at the research meetings of the particular disciplines – whether these are in the form of seminar programmes or annual conferences.

A simple list of these would include:

- The history workshop;
- Sociology conference;
- Applied linguistics conference;
- African Studies seminars; and
- Anthropology conference.

The goal of the proposal is to produce a situation in which the intellectual centre of gravity in literacy studies is seen and felt to lie between the disciplines rather than in any one.

Proposal 3: Public research agenda

The first two proposals will not get very far without the construction and maintenance of a 'public' research agenda in literacy studies.

This task seems to us to be the collective responsibility of the Departments of Adult Education, and there is a base in previous experience on which to build such a collective enterprise. What is needed is an initial two/three-day planning seminar, in which the priority work plans are debated and agreed and set against time lines and resource requirements. The management of such an agenda will be a difficult task, and will certainly require the full-time attention of one or more staff members, though precisely how these arrangements should be made will lie in the hands of the planning seminar.

Proposal 4: Educational development research

As discussed earlier, we take the view that alongside the research into the social uses and valuations of literacy there has to be planned research in the educational development field.

There are at least three major areas for this work – each dominated by basic questions, as well as carrying a host of minor issues.

The three areas are:

- Institutional development;
- Curriculum; and
- Pedagogy (including training and materials).

In this general research area we feel that it is vital to draw on the experience of practitioner bodies and groups from all sectors of provision. Given co-operation and participation we think it will be possible to set up a framework of coherence within which the key questions facing educational development *as a whole* can be asked and answered.

It is of the utmost importance that the research into educational development does not find itself trapped within a local 'improvement' and 'innovation' mould. Innovation and improvement will (of course) remain significant for individual programmes – the task of a specifically researched enquiry will be to generalize *across* programmes, curricula and institutions. Thus local research must be able to feed into a broader conceptual theory building enterprise.

The management of the education development component of the total research programme needs to be the responsibility of a joint university/practitioner body, with accountability links to the main planning body. Once more, we think this will require full-time staff service if it is to be able to maintain focus, direction and productivity. Such full-time staff should, we think, be in a university.

PHASE ONE: SUMMARY

Phase one should take one year from mid-1993 to mid-1994.

- It involves the employment of two full-time research worker/managers within a university.
- University Departments of Adult Education will meet at a three-day planning workshop to establish the public research agenda and to make provision for its management and direction. A director would be appointed by the workshop for the first phase.
- The library research aimed at indexing across disciplinary research against literacy issues would be completed within the first phase.
- The re-writing and re-presentation of the present paper in as many constituted intellectual forms as possible would be completed within the phase.
- The educational development research management group would be set up by the director, and a limited programme of enquiry initiated within an overall framework of coherence.

The goals for the end of phase one can be summed up as follows:

- An extended conceptual vocabulary linking students and researchers across specific disciplines.
- An organized research initiative under the direction of an agreed plan. Two full-time researchers.
- A body of empirical and theoretical information regarding the social uses of literacy.
- The beginnings of focused enquiry into institutional and curricular effectiveness.

PHASE TWO

The second phase of the research can only be suggested in outline since the priorities for understanding will only begin to emerge from the work in phase one.

However, even at this distance, it seems clear that the two basic forms of research will continue:

- Site-specific ethnographic studies of social usage; and
- Institutional studies to organize provision.

It is important that phase two be kept in view during phase one since the founding questions for the more focused work will emerge from the broader 'collection' of interests in the first phase.

At the end of phase one, the director will deliver the products of the period to the planning workshop to provide the impetus for the second phase planning.

We envisage the second phase taking at least two years in order to produce the kind of analysis and understanding which will make possible a core initiative in the organization of a national system. We do not think that the research initiative will be completed within the two phases that we have outlined, and that further work will be required though it is at the present moment too distant to be easily described.

It must be remembered that the attempt to construct a literacy/ABE system represents a bid to alter the balance of the whole social educational endeavour in favour of the dispossessed and that to do so will require immense leverage and effort. The proposed research plan appears painfully small against such a perspective.

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ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES – BROKERS OF UNIVERSITY EXTENSION?

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INTRODUCTION

The context for the question 'Adult Education Centres – brokers for University extension?' is the changing society which is also posing new questions and challenges to the accepted traditions and forms of formal tertiary education in South Africa. There is presently a desperate seeking within universities to re-define their role in terms of a social responsibility *vis á vis* communities which have historically been excluded from higher university education.

The desire to accommodate new commitments, to becoming less exclusive and more development-oriented find expression in the establishment of some departments' extension units. Such units suggest that the job of servicing lesser privileged communities does not necessarily have to be done by academic staff in departments themselves, but rather through 'special projects' and extension functionaries who are perceived to have skills distinct from the academic staff.

Other departments and members of the University 'hierarchy have argued that the CAE are ideal conduits for this extension role. Since the development and educational needs of these communities are particular and different from those of students, Centres for Adult Education with their histories of extra-mural studies and provision of 'popularised education' for the public, and development projects for grassroot organisations, seem ideally placed to answer those needs.

The seeking within universities coincides with the re-appraisal of what CAEs are engaged in. Our history of liberal and professional studies provision on the one hand, andcommunity service akin to that of NGOs on the other, compels us to question our role and position within universities in this period of transition.

This paper sketches this tension by examining briefly some of the arguments put forward for a proposed extension role of the CAEs. It then asks whether the question of extension is really a question about the role of university-based CAEs or a question around the role of the universities and their limited understanding of what extension entails.

EXTENSION ARGUMENT

Universities and departments looking to the CAEs to extend their function of providing tailor-made courses for the public in order to mediate their 'development' role, use some of the following arguments:

History of Extra Mural Studies

Many CAEs were initially established as extension units: they were the link between the university and those members of the public who were not enrolled in full- or part-time studies but who still wanted to study particular subjects, usually for reasons of personal self-fulfilment or professional development. To academic staff, teaching these courses not only represented another source of income, it provided them with an attractive chance to popularise some of their scientific and often esoteric findings. Extension work of this kind was, and is, seen as a worthwhile service to public adult and continuing education.

CAE staff: Expertise in providing specialised education

Our society is a society of experts and specialisation. Providing education for particular groups of society, from particular communities on very particular topics, is a task that the average academic staff member is not familiar with. The experience of providing continuing education has enabled CAE staff to develop the skills and capacities necessary for the provision of courses for the public. For members of staff in the CAE's extra-mural and community programmes, planning and organising educational provision and consultative work on a wide range of topics and skills is their daily challenge. On the basis of experience gathered through study and reflection on the one hand, and trial and error on the other CAE staff have some understanding of the what, how and who of course provision for the non-academic constituency.

They are familiar with questions like: Who is the education for? What do the learners want to get out of it? How should it be pitched? In what language and through what medium? Extensive networking allows them to approach a suitable educator who will not only be familiar with the specific subject matter but, given guidance, also be able to adjust it to the particular group of learners.

This guidance is crucial for appropriate delivery, and the staff of CAEs have a thorough base of experience and knowledge on which they can draw in order to provide it.

Administrative infrastructure

CAEs have a particular staff complement specifically employed to deal with educational provision for the public and different communities. This staff has developed expertise in the organisation and administration of educational provision. – CAEs have developed area maps, extensive mailing lists and networks of learners and providers, beyond those of the university who targets different audience as potential users. They have established links with the media and have thorough knowledge of communication channels which enable them to reach particular groupings of people and advertise courses efficiently and effectively.

Exclusivity argument

Unlike technical colleges, universities are institutions in which academic research and teaching is of a highly specialised nature, and the aim of the institution is to develop experts who will be in positions of leadership.

Academic staff cannot deal with the extra pressures of engaging in extension work, as they have been employed for their expertise in a particular subject. They are expected to constantly keep abreast of latest discoveries in their field, in order to pass these on to their students, who in turn want to become experts in those areas of study. If they take the research

in their subject seriously they cannot be expected to spend time on providing education for 'occasional students'.

If, for financial or other reasons, academic members of staff are interested in providing education through an extension project of the university, they do so over and above their primary duties. Hence, they do not have the capacity to develop entirely different programmes for people wanting to study for non-degree purpose, nor do they have the necessary time to devote to research and reflection on how most effectively to provide for the needs and wants of different learners. CAE's staff, through their daily engagement in questions of curriculum and provision, are ideally placed to assist them.

TRANSFORMATION ARGUMENT

What CAEs do well is train adult educators, research adult eduction and learning, and provide a wide range of adult education. Should they, instead, make accessible to those who are not the traditional university learners, the teaching and research which is going on in the rest of university?

Despite the convincing arguments suggested above, we strongly oppose the idea of turning CAEs into extension units and ourselves into brokers of the University's extension work. We do so for a number of reasons.

Firstly, yes, the staff of CAEs have expertise in the field of adult learning and educational provision. We have expertise because the subject matter of adult education forces us to ask questions about the Who? What? How? and Why? of educational endeavours. Our concern is with how learning happens. But this is a concern which all academic staff should share. Instead of focusing often solely on the subject matter and preparing to dispense it in hours of lecturing, and then employing student support experts to deal with the bafflement of students, academic staff would do well to spend some energy considering the process of learning and the implications this might have for their process of teaching.

The question to ask is not: How can CAEs translate and redesign the academic subject matter so that it can be made more palatable and accessible to a wider audience of learners? but rather: How can university departments include in their research and teaching the very people they wish to serve? One should not ask: How do you popularise academic findings? but rather: How do you engage in a more participatory process of learning and teaching: This would not only benefit students, but also the communities 'out there', and, importantly, the academic staff themselves.

Secondly, rather than attempting to build a bridge between the ivory tower of education specialists and practitioners in the field, there should be an endless criss-cross of footpaths between those two worlds. The suggestion that the educated academic should dispense some crumbs of learning among the less fortunate/disadvantaged seems to be not only an arrogant stance, but worse – it entrenches the notion of a one-sided relationship of giver and receiver, in which the university doles out learning and the hungry-for-knowledge community gratefully picks up the carefully selected, pre-digested and interpreted offerings.

If the research and teaching that happens in the mainstream departments is so far removed from the realities of the practitioners that it needs CAEs to mediate, one must ask how useful the products of this university work is? If research and teaching does not occur in the context of an on-going dialogue with the practitioners out there, then how do the academics know whether their great efforts are of any use to the people out there?

Rather than turning the people 'out there' into objects of investigation, academics should construct a partnership which recognises that, while society values different kinds of knowledge more, or less, the translation of research findings into praxis is a crucial test of their validity.

This dialogue between university departments and communities can be facilitated – and possibly CAEs could play a role in 'setting it up' – but like any relationship it must be developed and nurtured carefully between partners who respect each other and establish a sense of mutual accountability and trust.

If, as we believe, any science is only worthwhile if it serves the interests of humankind, universities will have to radically re-appraise both their curricula and their educational practice/methodology.

If extension signifies the universities' wish to become more inclusive systems, integrated with and contributing to the complexities of praxis in the world, then they cannot fob-off on the CAEs the role of mediators and interpreters for the teaching and research which takes place in the mainstream departments.

If extension means the involvement of the university in grassroots development they have to be prepared to transform the entire institution and its operation, and not stay within an essentially closed paradigm with the concession of extended feelers. We believe such a dialogue would lead us to a position where the university truly serves the people, and not just an outmoded impractical idea of 'higher learning'.

One might argue that CAE staff should play a role in facilitating some of this meta-learning process for academic staff, and, as a transitional service, this could become a role we play. It does not avoid the main problem, however, and that revolves around the limited understanding the university has of its interaction with communities.

SIX CRITERIA FOR NON FORMAL COURSE PROVISION

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What are the criteria we use, or could use, to select the kind of non formal courses we offer the public? Should we be giving preference to certain topics, or to certain audiences, over others?

The role of university departments in the education of educators is usually not contested. One reason is the perception that a multiplier effect operates – a limited amount of effort by us will translate into a much greater educational effort by the adult educators we train. Another is the perception that a suitable role for a university is that of professional development.

In comparison, provision is seen as something analogous to 'community service', some-thing that will look good on a CV but won't get you a job. The suggestion is often that it is not really the job of a university to do these things, and as other people become able and willing to do them, they should take over.

Justification for provision, for me, starts from an assumption about the role of adult education departments and centres – that they have the task of contributing to adult learning, especially in the regions in which they are located, and of contributing generally to the understanding of adult education. Within that brief, what criteria could we use?

It seems to me that the following criteria are used, often implicitly, or should be used, in selecting courses to offer:

1.. What is the impact on educational need?
2 Does the course exploit the university base?
3. Is it of economic value to the society?
4. Would it be a model of good adult education practice?
5. Does it provide opportunities for staff to learn and develop?
6. Would it be pragmatic to run the course?

EXAMINING THE CRITERIA

People have long recognised the scale of *adult education need* as immense. The assumption I have made about the purpose of adult education departments, strengthens arguments in favour of using a criterion of impact on need. But its application may be problematic. Who decides what the needs are? If we run a course on Italian frescos, and the participants say they found it

valuable, do we assume it is nonetheless a minor need in comparison to rural communities learning how to protect springs? Or do we use market demand as an adequate indicator of need?

The dangers of puritanism on the one hand, and complacency on the other, are obvious, though not sufficient to justify inaction. They suggest that using this criterion requires from educators, and if possible also learners, ways of making critical judgements about need.
A stronger argument against the use of this criterion is the number of other agencies that are now providing courses of various kinds on the grounds of responding to needs. Inevitably, the response of university departments is to carve out a different role. One is to focus on the education of educators as the way of addressing that need, through a multiplier effect, rather than through any kind of provision. An alternative response is to argue for certain areas of provision, such as community organisations, where we perceive the needs as greater and where the organisation, if effective, may itself play an educational role.

While this is obviously useful as a criterion for what we do generally, it is, I believe, inadequate as the major criterion when it comes to choosing between the courses we could provide.

The university base confers some real advantages in setting up courses. One is that we may be aware of new developments that have not reached the awareness of other agencies – such as chaos theory. We have access to a considerable range of human resources, and to facilities. Furthermore, universities are relatively safe places, so risky issues of race, gender and class, for example, can be addressed more freely here. There are issues that others won't raise because they will cause trouble or won't make money. It also allows, if it does not particularly encourage, innovation in methods of teaching.

It would be foolish not to bear these advantages in mind. But the criterion should not be used emphasized strongly. It doesn't help much in thinking about educational need. It may encourage us to tailor our courses to what is on offer at the university, and thus to tailor our audiences to those who are familiar with what the university offers. And perhaps it is appropriate for universities to offer courses on gender, race and class only after they have made progress in those areas.

As society's attention is focused more on economic survival, the *economic value* of courses offered will be a powerful criterion. Certainly in Europe, this has become a major focus of adult education activity – a recently published text begins with the words: 'There is a widespread consensus today that adult education and continuing vocational training are central elements in a strategy aimed at achieving economic growth and high life quality'

This favours the whole range of vocational courses, including courses that address ways of fostering workplace learning. Courses that are seen as more relevant to the economy are also likely to be favoured on pragmatic grounds – for example, they are likely to be financially rewarding.

Increasingly, this criterion makes sense not only to capitalists, but to all those who wish their economies to survive. Productivity is becoming a common concern. Within adult education need generally, learning for effectiveness at work has an undeniable claim on resources.

But how do we judge economic value? By increases in productivity? In producing what? Under whose control? These questions need to be answered in the decisions about course provision. Furthermore, what courses do we run? Courses on management? Vocational courses at other levels? Given the growing literature on the gap between education and work experience,

there are doubts about the value of such courses. One could argue that teaching workers to read may be more useful for the needs of the economy.

I consider this criterion to be insufficiently recognised and applied, but its application in making decisions about provision will require some hard thinking – possibly it emphasizes particularly the need to raise the critical issues in our courses.

The fourth criterion, that of *modelling*, encourages us to choose those courses we can do well – in their relevance to educational need, in their theoretical sophistication, in their ability to address difficult issues of participation and exclusion, in their organisation, methodology and presentation. The reason, apart from knowing we are doing a good job, would be to encourage other practitioners to follow these standards and to encourage learners to demand them.

An analogy is with transport – a role for a subsidised municipal bus service in a competitive environment is not necessarily to monopolise, but to be an intervention in the marketplace which demonstrates that customers can be transported safely and efficiently, exposes the rapacious and reckless operator, and acts as a restraint on fares.

Three difficulties with this criterion are: first, that it suggests a rather patronising attitude to other agencies, some of whom do a good job anyway; secondly, that maybe the impact of a few models is not going to be very significant, or will reach a limited number anyway; and thirdly, that providing model courses suggests a degree of control of courses that we can achieve usually only by running them ourselves. Use of the criterion could also discourage innovation and risk-taking.

The fifth criterion is that of *providing opportunities for learning through practice*. A powerful argument for selecting certain courses is that they offer staff a chance of learning the discipline of designing courses and running them. Reflection on this activity is a valuable source of understanding. Such courses provide what Schon refers to as 'a source of access to reflective practice'.

They can be a testing ground for our theoretical framework, by exposing us to issues that are likely to challenge or confirm the frameworks we use.

Teaching on courses may enable the further development of expertise. It gives opportunities for the testing and development of more effective educational methods. It can be a valuable source of the expertise needed for us to educate educators. A limitation of using this criterion is, of course, that we have to do at least some of the teaching ourselves. Although we can learn interesting things from course organisation, there is nothing to replace the opportunities for action and reflection created by running a course alone or with others. And there needs to be focused attention on the reflection process.

I consider this, however, the strongest justification to use, and one that provides arguments not simply for choices between courses but also for involvement in course provision.

Finally, the *pragmatic advantages* of certain courses inevitably play a role in decision making. These include courses that make money, courses that gain publicity, and courses that satisfy groups like university authorities and funders. These are needs that have to be met. The difficulty with the criterion is in its use without reference to other more cogent justifications. For example, we can be driven by profit in a Thatcherite way, but it would lead to the progressive impoverishment of our adult education understanding, as it would fail to engage our thinking about education.

CONCLUSION

I would argue that some of these criteria should carry more weight than others. The criteria of reflective practice, educational need and economic value seem, to me, to be more important than exploiting the university base, modelling or pragmatism. These criteria would favour, for example, courses aimed at strengthening community organisations in both their educational work and their economic activity.

Having said that, it must be recognised that the criteria I favour may conflict with each other. For example, a strong emphasis on reflective practice may limit the impact on educational need, because it would limit the number and range of courses that could be undertaken.

It would be helpful for those of us who are involved in course provision to debate these criteria, their selection and their weighting. Clarity about criteria used to judge between courses will help in gaining clarity about choices between provision and other activities – choices that will guide the growth and development of university departments of adult education.

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

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THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY BASED ADULT EDUCATION IN A NATIONAL AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY: WHAT CAN WE BE DOING TO PROMOTE NATIONAL EQUITY?

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INTRODUCTION

Although pressure still needs to be applied to the existing structures controlling political power in South Africa for meaningful change and to arrive at a just political dispensation, the emphasis is moving away from 'the struggle' to that of reconstruction and planning for a 'new South Africa'. Affirmative action can (and probably will) play a major role in addressing the injustices and disparities of the apartheid system. This paper considers what national affirmative action policy could be introduced in the future, and what role university based adult education can play in the promotion of equity, now and in a post-apartheid South Africa.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Affirmative action conjures up different meanings for different people, and can assume different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. It is therefore necessary to come to a common understanding of the term 'affirmative action' for the purpose of this paper. In order to do this, other related terms which are sometimes used synonymously will first be explored, namely 'black advancement' and 'equal opportunity'. Since the topic has to address racial, ethnic and gender issues in the South African context, the terms 'Black' and 'White' will be used purely for descriptive purposes, with no intentions of offence or racialism.

Black Advancement

This term implies the advancement of Blacks within an organisation, into positions of more decision making power, through accelerated routes. Black advancement only, is not affirmative action *per se*, but rather an element of an affirmative action strategy. The actual practice of Black advancement in the past (and probably in the future) has led to a number of adverse connotations attached to this term and its policy implications. Some of the criticisms levelled at this policy (and often affirmative action in general) are:

- It can be paternalistic and 'top-down'.
- There is a real danger of tokenism.
- It has racial connotations, i.e. only Blacks are eligible, which could be contemptuous to Blacks, and it precludes the advancement of other 'oppressed' groups such as woman.
- Only a trivial number of the historically disadvantaged will benefit by inviting them to join the ranks of the White managers and, in turn, estranging and alienating them from their own communities.

- It tends to be reduced to mere 'window-dressing' or an exercise in aesthetics.
- It recreates the past as only a few will still control the wealth of the country and – these few will be predominantly white.

Equal employment opportunity

Equal employment opportunity implies the selection and advancement of staff purely on qualifications, merit and abilities, regardless of race, sex or religion. It clearly falls within a liberal philosophy and has its assumptions buried in an evolutionary context. An evolutionary context implies 'the survival of the fittest'. The major criticism of equal employment opportunity is that it is too passive and will perpetuate the current situation or maintain the status quo. Due to the historical discrepancies between Whites and Blacks caused by the apartheid system, it is naïve to believe that we can all compete on an equal footing. Apart from the inequalities of our education system and social milieu, Blacks are also expected to compete in an essentially Eurocentric or Western cultural paradigm, which is not only often foreign for them but they have also been denied access to function within this paradigm. The result would mean that Whites will still dominate as a result of their historical advantages.

Affirmative action

In order to introduce this section some definitions follow:

- 'Affirmative action is a recognised way of promoting the principle of equality of opportunities in societies, where this principle has suffered as a result of discrimination or where less developed persons have to compete with more developed persons. It is recognised in international law as being non-discriminatory, so long as it is temporary and is not enforced against the will of the minority. In appropriate cases it does not amount to discrimination, since the fact that those who have lost their positions in a programme of affirmative action properly executed do not actually lose anything they would have had in a fair race. Programmes of affirmative action must be implemented with great care if reverse discrimination is to be prevented." The South African Law Commission, *Report on Group and Human Rights* (1989, 445).
- "Any action designed to remove inequalities." Quotation from A. Sachs, advisor to ANC working group, CODESA II, at a debate organised by The South African Institute of Race Relations on 1 October 1992.
- 'Affirmative action in South Africa should rather be regarded as a massive upliftment programme with a guarantee of equal employment opportunities.' Quotation from T. Leon, M.P. for Houghton and an advisor to CODESA II working group, also at the above debate.
- The term 'affirmative action' can be the application of real and tangible measures to allow all individuals of a society to compete on an equal basis, by redressing injustices of an immediate past, and without unduly perpetrating further injustices (own definition).

It can be argued that apartheid was a rigorous form of affirmative action (or social engineering) in favour of Whites. In order to redress the inequalities of the past, a reverse strategy is now required, rather like unravelling a knot in the reverse procedure.

One real and obvious danger of an affirmative action programme is that it can recreate the injustices of the past and fall victim of the same evils of apartheid. This is a major concern, especially among Whites. Obviously Whites are the most threatened by affirmative action pro-

grammes as they could become the victims of reverse discrimination and have their privileges removed or nullified. These fears are often unjustified as affirmative action should only serve to provide an equal footing for all to compete from. Whites (and their progeny) will maintain their historical advantages for quite some time in the future. It is also unlikely that a national affirmative action programme will be very detrimental to the economy and, in fact, the reverse may be true, as no rational government will 'kill the goose which lays the golden eggs'.

Many terminologies exist similar to the concept of affirmative action such as 'positive discrimination' and 'redistribution of wealth'. For the purpose of this paper, I will adopt a very broad meaning of the term affirmative action, namely, the creation and promotion of equity. Furthermore, we need to move away from thinking in terms of 'Black and White' and rather think in terms of individuals' historic disadvantages. These individuals will be largely people of colour, woman and the disabled.

CONTEXTUALISING THE NEED FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In this section I do not wish to argue the need for affirmative action in South Africa as I will probably be preaching to the converted. I also do not wish to bombard you with results of research which depict frightening figures of how few Blacks are qualified and the great imbalances in wealth distribution. What is apparent, is that affirmative action programmes in South Africa have met with very little success, and no major impact has yet been made in the redistribution of wealth or black empowerment. What may be of some relevance, however, is to look at the South African university situation with regard to student and staff composition. Despite some universities adopting affirmative action policies, the following tables, showing student and professional staff composition, suggest that we too have had very little success.

UNIVERSITY	WHITES	COLOUREDS	INDIANS	BLACKS	TOTAL
UCT	10 069 70.6%	1 948 13.7%	551 3.9%	1 700 12&	14 268 100%
NATAL	8 114 60.5%	278 2%	2 804 21%	2 210 16.5%	13 406 100%
WITS	13 666 74%	316 1.7%	1 678 9%	2 872 15.5%	18 532 100%
W.CAPE	163 1.2%	8 974 64%	518 3.7%	4 270 30.6%	13 925 100%
S.BOSCH	13 692 94%	804 5.5%	20 0.12%	72 0.5%	14 525 100%
PRETORIA	21 636 98%	103 0.5%	35 0.2%	288 1.3%	22 062 100%
OFS	8 882 94.5%	301 3.2%	0 0%	212 2.3%	9 395 100%
RAU	8 726 93.3%	405 4.3%	26 0.3%	191 2%	9 348 100%
POTCH	8 372 94.5%	132 1.5%	18 0.2%	338 3.8%	8 860 100%0
RHODES	3 228 79%	125 3%	211 5%	536 13%	4 100 100%
UNISA	56 074 47%	5 161 4.3%	10 012 8.4%	48 413 40.5%	119 660 100%

TABLE 1. 1991 student composition for various universities. Source: Central Statistical Service, Pretoria.

UNIVERSITY	WHITES	COLOUREDS	INDIANS	BLACKS	TOTAL
UCT	845	21	10	20	896
NATAL	815	1	54	34	904
WITS	974	13	20	40	1 047
W.CAPE	276	294	23	25	618
S.BOSCH	1 016	1	2	4	1 023
PRETORIA	1 631	0	1	5	1 637
OFS	760	0	0	1	761
RAU	377	0	0	2	379
POTCH	574	1	0	3	578
RHODES	333	1	3	11	348
UNISA	1 487	2	6	55	1 550

TABLE 2. 1991 professional personnel composition for various universities.
Source: Central Statistical Service, Pretoria

WHAT NATIONAL AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY CAN WE EXPECT IN THE FUTURE?

Not being a clairvoyant, I cannot predict the future. However, current developments and the ideologies of key political organisations can help illuminate the nature of a future national affirmative action policy. This section will therefore address two key questions: Will there be a legislated national affirmative action policy and, if so, what may this policy be?

Since the National Party chose the road of reform, there seems to have been a major shift in the affirmative action debate. No longer is the thrust of the debate on whether a national affirmative action policy should be introduced but rather on the nature and form of an affirmative action policy. Should a nationally representative government come into power (which I believe we all hope for!) there will be considerable pressure to address the imbalance of power and the unequal distribution of resources. Given this scenario, there are only the following options available:

- To confiscate;
- Do nothing; or
- To promote and create equity in the interests of all South Africans.

Given these options, there seems no option but to pursue the promotion of equity. It is therefore plausible to assume that an affirmative action policy will be included in a Bill of Rights and written into a new constitution.

Having argued that a national affirmative action policy will exist in a 'new South Africa', I would like to speculate on the nature and form of such a policy. At present, no political party has forwarded any concrete policy apart from the African National Congress (ANC). Since the

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ANC is a major contender for future control of South African government and administration, their affirmative action policy can be used as a gauge OF what can be expected in a new constitution, and as a springboard to build or negotiate a new constitution. Following is a brief account of M. Albie Sach's proposal of the ANC's affirmative action national policy proposal for a future constitution (as interpreted by me at the abovementioned debate organised by the HSRC.

The four main areas to be addressed would be: education, health, housing and employment. There must be equal spending per capita and affirmative action programmes will be targeted for Blacks, women, and the disabled. A quota system with time deadlines is not being espoused, but rather a more holistic approach of 'nation building' and 'equity as a foundation'. Although no quota system is being proposed, pressure will be applied on all organisations (especially the civil service and defence force) to be 'representative' of the population 'at some time in the future' (proportionality). To preserve standards, unqualified people will not be given jobs, but rather be given opportunities for development and enabled to fill these posts. The following principles should guide the policy:

- Responsibility of the state, industry and the private sectors (social responsibility).
- Security (people must know what their position is).
- Equity is the foundation.
- Inclusiveness (consultation with all involved and not imposed).
- Proportionality (Civil service, defence force, and organisations in general should reflect the composition of the population).
- Accountability to all.
- Flexibility (different strategies to suite different organisations and situations).

The above national affirmative action is similar to that which has been adopted by Namibia. The main criticisms of this policy, and indeed of all affirmative action policies, are how 'aggressively' will it be pursued, and for how long? How will we know when we have reached an acceptable level of equity?

WHAT ARE WE DOING AT THE DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION?

Adult education in South Africa is already playing a key role in the promotion of equity. At the heart of adult education programmes is usually an intention of personal development for the learner, and some improvement of the quality of life. Coupled to this is the assumption that adult education, through individuals, can help improve the positions of communities and societies. Many if not most of these adult education activities are targeted for the historically disadvantaged in our quest against 'widespread ignorance'. The issue becomes: What more can we do to promote equity? and How can we make what we are already doing more effective?

As adult educators there are many roles we can play, and are expected to play, in this promotion of equity. Some of these could be:

- To provide encouragement, advice and moral support (resource centre).
- Initiating and getting involved in the piloting and evaluation of small scale (or large) innovative programmes, with a view of expansion.

- Training/educating educators of adults in its broadest sense.
- Put adult education on the agenda for a future constitution and be involved in the formulation of future policy (without serving and protecting self interests too much.)
- Create and disseminate knowledge (research).

The decision becomes one of whether we should play all these roles or place more emphasis on some only. In addition, we need to consider how we can play these roles in a manner which maximises our potential. The Division of Adult Education at WITS has responded to the situation through four main areas: student selection, the curriculum, academic support and student research. Underpinning much of our practice is the intention to promote and strengthen the leadership/management and effectiveness of adult education activities.

Student selection

Entrance requirements for the Higher Diploma For Educators of Adults (HDEA) are a matriculation exemption certificate, a degree or equivalent qualification, approximately three years experience and applicants must be practising in the field of adult education.

For the last three years we have been receiving at least one hundred applications for the HDEA each year, with approximately half of the applicants meeting the entry requirements. With only twenty-five to thirty-five places available, selection becomes an ethically agonizing procedure. Since we do not have the resources to interview all qualifying candidates, we have resorted to the perusal of applicants' curriculum vitae and, in some instances, requested applicants to complete a questionnaire as well. On some occasions we may conduct a further interview, telephonically, should we still require further information. Many applications are clearly automatic entries and it is not unusual to have applicants with qualifications at Masters level and occasionally at Doctorate level as well. The dilemma is to fill the last approximately ten to fifteen places with twice as many suitable applicants. Two further criteria (applied to all applications) are now applied more vigorously: the area of the applicant's practice and the magnitude of the applicant's leadership role in the field of adult education. In many instances the criteria of leadership roles and field of practice plays a major part in the decision about entrance and it is in this manner we believe equity can be promoted. Applicants who do not have a matric exemption certificate can sometimes qualify for exemption based on mature age. Those candidates who do not have a degree, and who may fall short on equivalent qualifications, would be very favourably considered should they hold an influential position in an area of adult education with a just cause.

A policy based on a quota system has therefore never been practised, as we believe this is not the most effective way to promote equity on a national basis. The results of the above selection procedure produce very diverse learning groups in terms of fields of practice, beliefs, ideologies, experience, knowledge and ethnic groups. This diversity is generally considered as an opportunity rather than a threat for the learning process. Any group will typically have representation in fields such as health, adult basic education, formal education (including tertiary education), trade unions, politics, training, agriculture, etc. with the strongest representation from members of non-governmental organisations. Blacks and whites, women and men are

approximately equally represented, not by deliberate design, but rather as a result of the above selection procedure (see Table 3 below).

WHITE	MALE	FEMALE	BLACKS	TOTAL
129	111	127	113	240
54%	46%	53%	47%	100%

TABLE 3: A comparison of students accepted for the HDEA from 1983 to 1993 between Black (including Coloureds and Indians) White and male/female.

The selection of the BEd students is done at a faculty level. Accepted students do two thirds of their degree in a specialised area known as options. The Division of Adult Education offers an option in adult education. The adult education option has become one of the most popular options, with more suitable candidates applying than available places (15–20). When possible, the same selection procedure is applied as that of the HDEA. The composition of the BEd intake in our option is similar to that of the faculty with a Black/White ratio of 8:2, and woman being clearly in the majority.

Curriculum

The HDEA is modelled on a part-time, in-service, block release system. The model is similar to a distance education mode,l but with more physical student/staff contact hours. Students are required to spend a five-day working week at WITS, four times a year, for the two-year duration of the HDEA. With a strong theme on personal and professional development, students are allowed to pursue personal and work-related interests, with strong encouragement to apply theory to practice. Rather than student assessment taking the form of traditional written exams, they are required to submit written assignments. The assignment topics are often broad enough for learners to relate theory to practice (and vice versa) in work-related issues. The in-service structure, the emphasis on personal and professional development, and the linking of theory to practice, we believe, should enhance the quality of leadership/management in the field of adult education, and also improve the effectiveness of the various adult education activities in which learners are and will be involved in.

The group diversity which is a result of the selection procedure, provides a 'forum' for the sharing and exchange of ideas among learners. With staff facilitation, learners are able to assess their own assumptions and those of others. This process should hopefully lead to more critical awareness and reflection. Through this process, learners not only have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of themselves and others around them, but also develop an attitude of better tolerance and acceptance. In addition, the concept of adult educators being agents of social change, is an unveiled theme in the curriculum.

Accelerated routes and the issue of accreditation have also been addressed within the general course structures. Learners in the HDEA programme who demonstrate ability and hold a recognised Bachelor degree can be accepted in the Masters programme, without having to complete a

BEd degree. In addition, a precedent has maybe been established by permitting a non-graduate, after the completion of the HDEA, to proceed to the Masters programme after completing a BEd very successfully.

Academic support

Academic support programmes are provided at a university level through the Academic Support Programme. In addition, staff at the Division of Adult Education provide academic support for their learners through the curriculum, personalised supervision and the giving of extensive and detailed feedback on written work. Academic support through the curriculum will include sessions on study skills, writing skills and critical thinking skills. Learners are also encouraged to form learning groups which provide peer support.

Student research

Research demands one-third of the curriculum in both the HDEA and the BEd programme. Learners select their own research topic under staff supervision and guidance. With few exceptions, learners choose topics leading to the improvement of their work-related adult education programmes. Due to the time limitations involved, this research is often on a small scale and mostly applied research. The reasons for this emphasis on research are:

- To promote a sense of enquiry among the learners, and encourage them to collect and interpret information more systematically in order to make informed decisions concerning the management and development of their adult education programmes.
- To encourage them to engage in further research in the future and be able to critically evaluate others' research.
- To encourage more documentation of adult education activities in South Africa and promote the production of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

This paper explores the meaning of affirmative action in the context of a possible future national affirmative action policy. It adopts a holistic and broad approach to affirmative action, and outlines what the Division of Adult Education at WITS is doing to promote national equity.

COMPETING CONCEPTS OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

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'Affirmative action' means different things to different people. Nelson Mandela, speaking at a 1991 ANC conference on affirmative action, said:

> To millions, affirmative action is a beacon of positive expectation. To others it is an alarming spectre which is viewed as a threat to their personal security and a menace to the integrity of public life.

What exactly are the different meanings of affirmative action to which Mandela refers, and why should they be relevant to university-based adult educators in South Africa? The aim of this paper is to answer these questions by means of a critical review of South African literature on affirmative action in the workplace. The paper attempts to unravel the ambiguous nature of affirmative action, and to relate the ideological, moral and political arguments underlying it to two dominant philosophies of adult education. The potential contribution of this paper lies, therefore, in putting current ideas about affirmative action into a new framework – that of adult education.

There are five facets to the analysis presented in this paper:

1) Identifying the 'problems' which drive the different concepts and initiatives known collectively as affirmative action;
2) Linking particular policies, strategies and practices to different concepts of affirmative action;
3) Exploring social and educational theories underpinning affirmative action;
4) Marshalling critical comment on each concept and its associated practices; and
5) Relating different concepts of affirmative action to recognized philosophical approaches to adult education.

Before proceeding to an analysis of affirmative action in South Africa, it is necessary to make some observations about the way the term is used beyond our borders. In the West, affirmative action is understood to mean government or institutional policies directed towards equalizing opportunities – particularly in the workplace and in higher education for minority groups and women. Policies aiming to eliminate institutional discrimination have been developed and implemented in the USA[1], Canada, Australia and the UK in the past two decades. In America, affirmative action is considered appropriate and effective when it promotes the aggressive recruitment of workers, students and faculty members from ethnic minorities and women. The 'quota' and 'timetable' systems[2] associated with affirmative action have become notorious for discriminating

against white males, and have been seen to entrench negative attitudes towards the employability and educability of ethnic minorities and women. Yet the legal and social coercion implicit in affirmative action policies are credited by some writers (Thomas, 1990; Jones, 1986) with having brought about a more 'diverse' workforce and student body in the USA.[3] Today, more than half of the US workforce consists of people other than white, native-born males.

In America these days affirmative action is increasingly perceived as a powerful, but artificial and transitional intervention which succeeded in correcting unjust employment and university admission patterns (Thomas, 1990). Now that the workforce is more diverse, attention has shifted from affirmative action to 'managing diversity'.[4] The new challenge[5] is to change the assimilation philosophy associated with affirmative action to a management philosophy which accepts and supports the cultural diversity of employees and client communities. 'Managing diversity' is expected to become a major social movement in America in the 1990s, inspiring the same kind of vision and idealism as environmentalism and feminism, and attracting the sort of attention from researchers and academics that multiculturalism in schools did in the 1980s.

In South Africa, instead of declining, the debate on affirmative action is assuming greater prominence and urgency in the context of recent political developments.[6] The term 'affirmative action' is used loosely to cover a wide range of programmes and strategies, including:

1) Bursaries and academic support programmes for black students at universities and technikons;
2) Preferential financial assistance by business to institutions or communities which have been traditionally disadvantaged;
3) Corporate social welfare programmes for employees, including housing loans and basic adult education courses; and
4) Preferential recruitment and selection procedures in large companies and academic institutions.

Attempts to delineate the boundaries of affirmative action precisely are sometimes obscured by the use of euphemisms such as 'corrective action' and 'positive action' as well as rubrics such as 'black advancement'[7] and 'social responsibility'.[8] In Africa, particularly, the term 'affirmative action' is often confused with the process of Africanization,[9] following independence from colonial rule.

I believe that two concepts of affirmative action are evolving in South Africa which are distinct from Western concepts and practices. The first of these concepts views affirmative action as a programme of action instituted by the management of an organization (in the private sector or the public service) to recruit, train and nurture black employees, in preference to white ones, for supervisory and management positions. The second concept of affirmative action calls for the massive redistribution of resources and opportunities to historically denied or dispossessed people.[10] In this paper I am going to refer to the first of these concepts as the 'human resources development' concept of affirmative action, and to the second concept as 'affirmative action as structural change'.

THE 'HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT' CONCEPT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

This concept prevails in South African business organizations, government institutions and development agencies. In these organizations, affirmative action is a strategic, pragmatic

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response to three perceived problems. The first problem is the **'skills shortage'** which is believed to hamper the economic growth and development of South Africa. Although it has been argued that these shortages have been exaggerated and misrepresented,[11] Human and Human (1989) believe that the development of a professional management group is crucial to organizational effectiveness, and that a country which is unable to develop its peoples' skills will be unlikely to develop anything else. Statistics showing a critical shortage of management skills have been widely publicized in South Africa,[12] and it has been estimated that by the year 2000 there will be a shortage of 212 000 managers and 200 000 skilled technical employees (Hofmeyr and Templer, 1992).[13]

Playing down its own complicity in this state of affairs, business accuses 'Bantu Education' of contributing to the shortage of skilled and semi-skilled workers in South Africa, to the high rates of illiteracy and innumeracy inhibiting economic development, and to the small number of black workers and graduates seen to have the ability or potential for promotion to managerial positions. Business people believe that action to redress this shortage will have to be taken by the private sector itself, the state education system proving impervious to the pace and direction of change which business wishes to see.[14]

The second force driving this concept of affirmative action is a desire to bolster **social stability**. At a time of economic recession, heightened violence, and uncertainty about the future political, economic and social direction of the country, management is torn between a 'siege mentality' in which the emphasis is on survival and short-term profits,[15] and a realization that there are not enough black people in management positions to serve a stabilizing function in society. The black middle class, first fostered as a buffer between the white establishment and militant black workers and students,[16] and now elevated to partners in free enterprise, is still relatively small and powerless. It cannot be counted on to protect a stake in a market economy and to uphold Western business values and practices.

Finally, business is responding, grudgingly, to a moral imperative to **integrate** black people and advance them within exisiting organizational structures. This imperative may be internally[17] or externally driven. Many South African companies are responding to pressure from their parent organizations,[18] or clients overseas, in acknowledging their contribution to past injustices, and their responsibility to redress them now. In addition, business believes that the state has abdicated responsibility for racial integration and modernization, and that the private sector is obliged to take a leading role, especially in the financing of educational and welfare programmes.

A theoretical rationale for the human resources development concept of affirmative action lies in Human Capital Theory, which derives from classical economic theory and the capitalist growth school of thought which also underpins Modernization Theory. Human Capital Theory holds that money and time devoted to education and training should be viewed as an investment in human capital, rather than as a cost to an organization. The argument runs as follows: the variations in pay received by the workforce reflect inequalities in the human capital that employees bring with them to work. Groups which are disadvantaged in the labour market (for example, women and black people) owe their inferior rewards to their lower investment in human capital. An investment in the education and training of disadvantaged groups should increase their productivity, allowing them to earn the higher pay received by better-educated individuals and groups in society.

Human Capital Theory is also used to explain the underdevelopment of poor Third World nations. The argument here, is that these countries need a greater investment in the education and training of their people to put them on the track to economic growth and modernization. Human Capital Theory is attractive to strategic planners in state and business organizations for a number of reasons:

- It promises perpetual economic growth. More investment in education creates higher productivity, which in turn creates higher economic growth; higher growth pays for more investment in education.
- It promises an end to poverty. More and better education gives children of disadvantaged groups (or poor nations) the 'capital' to create wealth.
- It promises a more equal society. Class barriers are broken down as all members of society acquire education.
- It reinforces values of individualism and the idea that existing standards of performance and efficiency in work organizations are high, and must be upheld.
- It assumes that employers are rational people, who maximize profits by paying only what the productivity of each individual employee justifies.
- It promises that manpower needs can be anticipated and co-ordinated through educational planning.

In the 1970s and '80s, the promises and assumptions of Human Capital Theory were challenged by educationists such as Blaug (1980), Dore (1976) and Little (1984), and in South Africa by Chisholm (1983) and Samuels and Nasson (1990). The theory was seen to be flawed; it promised too much, too fast. It became apparent that there were no simple relationships between 'inputs' and 'outputs' in education.[19] More money and time invested in education and training did not automatically produce more productive workers or stronger economies. Family background and social class were discovered to be more potent institutions for the economic success of individuals and groups than the school. Societies which managed to reduce rates of innumeracy and illiteracy did not thereby eliminate poverty, or create equality. One of the most enduring criticisms of Human Capital Theory has been that it deflects attention from structural problems and turns them into individual ones.

Despite these criticisms, the promises and assumptions of Human Capital Theory are still reflected in the thinking of many educational and manpower planners. In South Africa in the 1980s, when legal barriers to the occupational mobility of black people were gradually broken down,[20] some South African companies began to recruit black managers, particularly in 'front office' positions and service-related fields such as personnel, industrial relations and public relations. The Riekert and Wiehahn Reports of 1979, advocated the use of education and training to achieve black advancement in the economic sector, while codes of employment, such as the Sullivan Code and the EEC Code, emphasized the need to create 'equal' selection and promotion processes through education and training.

A key feature of affirmative action in the human resources development mould is the emphasis placed on **deficit models of performance**. The onus is placed squarely on the individual, or the corporation, to improve, or at least maintain, existing standards of productivity and efficiency. According to several recent studies (reported in Human and Human, 1989; Human and

Hofmeyr, 1987; Hofmeyr and Templer, 1991) black managers have not met the standards of productivity, effectiveness and efficiency set by white employees. Explanations of this poor performance have focused primarily on the deficits of black managers,[21] and to a lesser extent on the deficits of South African corporations. Black managers' under-performance has been attributed to their inferior education and preparation for work; their traditional culture, which is assumed to be incompatible with the free enterprise system[22]; and their marginal position[23] in white-led organizations. Racial bias and discrimination against blacks, especially in the ranks of middle management;[24] 'neutrality' and lack of commitment of white colleagues; and the imposition of alien corporate values and cultures are shortcomings attributed to South African companies (Human, 1991).

Strategies and practices associated with the human resources development concept of affirmative action emphasize **planning, induction, socialization, and compensatory education and training**[25]

They include:

- The development of manpower planning models to guide the selection, development and assessment of employees (including detailed job and performance specifications, mechanisms to identify management potential and individual training or developmental needs, and career path planning).
- Achievement training programmes, designed to stimulate participants' individuality, assertiveness and risk-taking propensity.[26]
- Bridging education programmes which prepare individuals or small groups of school leavers for entry into business by focusing on learning, decision-making, and problem-solving skills, as well as basic business principles.
- Coaching and mentoring programmes to groom high-potential employees for management roles.
- Initial placement of black managers in 'soft' positions in which their perceived cultural conditioning makes them most suitable, for example, social responsibility and community relations (and in which positions they also become transmitters of free enterprise ideology to others).

In a critique of such strategies, Human (1991) argues for a move away from deficit models of black unpreparedness for the white corporate world, towards recognition of the role played by organizational culture in general, and white managers in particular, in the development of black managers. Strategies associated with such a move include:

- Involving organized labour (as the voice or protector of black employees) in corporate strategies affecting the work and life of employees.
- Developing programmes to assist white workers overcome their resistance to change in the organization.[27]
- Efforts to open up lines of communication and 'value sharing' between white and black employees, and between senior management and black trainees.[28]
- Explaining and publicising affirmative action activities to secure employees' support.[29]
- Placing recruits in 'hard' positions in line management or profitmaking divisions in which they may rise and be seen by others to rise on the basis of merit into positions of responsibility and influence.[30]

Human's view is shared by Birkenbach and Hofmeyr (1990) who favour a development philosophy centred on a culture of the learning organization,[31] and by Hofmeyr and Templer (1992) who propose a management education curriculum for South African universities which would encourage more flexible, critical thinking.

Although there is considerable agreement among human resources development specialists about the need for and direction of organizational change, progress in many organizations has been slow. Bowmaker-Falconer (1993) observes that claims of progress towards employment equity have become public relations exercises, and that the available pool of black managers has remained static.[32] In 1991, Hofmeyr reported that blacks occupied only 2,2% of managerial posts, and less than 1% of executive positions in South African companies. Furthermore, these figures have remained virtually unchanged since 1980. This may be attributed to the serious economic recession in South Africa (companies have few vacancies; budgets for affirmative action and training programmes are vulnerable to cuts in the face of large-scale retrenchments) as well as to the perceived limits of white employees' tolerance of black empowerment (Hofmeyr and Templer, 1991). Another explanation for the lack of progress in affirmative action is suggested by Christie (1992: 10) who points out that the private sector has no enforceable obligations to its clientele with respect to its social responsibility activities, and no accountability to other groups in society. At present, business is unwilling, or unable, to negotiate and share control of initiatives with community organizations and political groups. The point is neatly illustrated by an AngloAlpha executive, interviewed by Alperson (1992: 53), who described his company as an 'equal opportunity company' rather than an 'equalizing company', a distinction to which we shall return in the next section of this paper.

Critique of affirmative action activities from within the human resources development paradigm, led by Human (1993 and 1992), Hofmeyr (1991) and Bowmaker-Falconer (1993), centres on the following points:

- Underlying motives for action are often governed by fear and guilt rather than a desire to succeed in the long term.[33] Affirmative action is seen as an inconvenience, or necessary evil, rather than a proactive mechanism for development and integration (Bowmaker-Falconer, 1993).
- A tendency to take an operational, rather than strategic approach to black advancement, characterized by internal, technical and short-term aspects of the organization (Human, 1991).
- South African companies invest too little in training and development, especially when compared with international rates.[34]
- Inadequate training and development at a supervisory level, make bottom-up development and promotion problematic.[35]
- Institutional constraints, including deeply entrenched prejudices, tend to be hidden or ignored, rather than exposed and addressed.

The human resources development concept of affirmative action can be likened to what Millar (1989) has described as the 'technological discourse' of adult education:

> It is education understood in assembly-line terms as the production of human skills and capacities. The specification of educational objectives in performance terms becomes the

> key task of the educator/manager, and learners are assessed and programmes evaluated in terms of their achievement of these objectives. This is a powerful and pervasive story of what counts in education, especially in the commercial, industrial and military contexts. Its great attractions are extreme simplicity, close-fit with productivity ethics, its ability to appear to deliver the goods, and its powerful capacity for social control.

Both the human resources development concept of affirmative action and Millar's 'technological discourse' are characterized by low social change goals. Control of the change process is located within the system: the introduction and direction of change is a management prerogative, and tends to reflect conservative cultural and social values. Incremental change efforts are directed to protecting socio-economic stability, and boosting individual productivity and efficiency. The adult educator functions as a 'manager' of the learning environment and of resources, charged with matching employee development to organizational growth. Behaviourist principles and methodologies underlie much of this form of adult education.[36]

The human resources development concept of affirmative action, and the educational philosophy which frames it, is at odds with the concept of affirmative action as structural change, the next one to be examined in this article.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AS STRUCTURAL CHANGE

This concept of affirmative action, promoted by the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and other organizations of the Left, is just beginning to gain currency in South Africa. Until recently, the structural change view of affirmative action was overshadowed by two other strands of thinking – the human resources development concept of affirmative action, on the one hand, and scepticism that education has the power to change important structural features of economic and social life, on the other.[37] Yet as the democratic and labour movements enter into discussions of public policy, and their proposals are circulated more widely, their views appear to consolidate and become more pragmatic.

The structural change concept of affirmative action is wider, but no less confusing than the human resources development concept.[38] A similarity between them is that both concepts focus on inequality between racial groups, rather than within groups. Although some proponents of the structural change concept emphasize the gender and class base of affirmative action,[39] strategies to redress class, gender and regional imbalances remain on the margins of this concept.[40] The main thrust is the empowerment of the black community as a whole, by means of redistributing wealth, resources and services, as well as access to them.

In terms of its redistributive aims, the structural change concept of affirmative action may be seen to be driven by three imperatives, referred to here as political, moral and theoretical imperatives. The **political imperative** for the democratic and labour movements to engage in affirmative action is a need to reward and develop their own constituencies. Draft affirmative action and education policies are located firmly within a political agenda focusing on economic development and redistribution.[41]

Closely linked to the political imperative is a **moral symmetry** principle, which argues that black South Africans have long been powerless, down-graded, patronized, deskilled and dimin-

ished. Moral symmetry calls for redress of the historical injustices and imbalances perpetrated against black people. The blame for this situation is placed squarely on apartheid, which resulted in an inequitable and differentiated supply of goods, services, opportunities, infrastructure and life experience, justified by ethnic differences.[42] The transition to a new order must be based on the eradication of these injustices and imbalances, and for that, more than the abolition of discriminatory practices is required.

A **theoretical imperative** for affirmative action, in the form of critical theory, can be discerned in the work of some writers in this field.[43] Drawing on the Frankfurt school of critical social theory and neo-Marxism, this form of analysis is mainly concerned[44] with identifying the dominant cultural values and hegemonic processes embedded in social arrangements, and the ways in which capitalist forms of organization are reflected in the provision of education and training. Such an analysis provides an opportunity for people to see the constraints and potential for change in their situation, and provides a base for informed and committed action – in this case, proposals for structural changes to society.

A detailed critical analysis of the human resources development concept of affirmative action has not yet been undertaken,[45] but even a cursory reading of most corporate affirmative action programmes would expose them as narrow, instrumental and diversionary, their covert aim being to exert power through the exercise of ideological hegemony, backed by social and economic policy. This is achieved by creating a set of standards or norms (for example, performance standards) which employees are required to meet. These standards are upheld by educators, trainers, and mentors who transmit 'positive' values concerning work and the organization. These positive values are linked to free enterprise and membership of the middle class. Corporate affirmative action programmes may well be interpreted as a form of neo-colonial incorporation of potential black leaders, fragmenting black society with dire consequences for the poor, the unemployed, and the rural and migrant worker majority. In the process of incorporation, a potential threat to the established order is removed, the stability of capitalism is reinforced, but essential inequalities in society remain unchanged.[46] Indeed corporate affirmative action programmes may be seen to reproduce and perpetuate existing patterns of inequality and segregation in South Africa.

Policies and strategies associated with the structural change concept of affirmative action have their roots in criticism of existing practices, and advance a vision of a better society. Proposals are wide-ranging, encompassing constitutional provision, economic upliftment and educational change. Sachs (1992), for example, proposes that affirmative action be defined and protected in the new constitution,[47] suggesting a long-term intervention which also guides 'nation building' activities and development policy. Langa (1992) proposes a shift from academic and degree-oriented university education to technical skills-oriented education, while the ANC (Samuel, 1992) and COSATU (1992) call for the creation of a single Department of Education, Vocational Training and Development at national level, which would create a closer relationship and continuity between general and vocational education, in schools and in the workplace.

According to Innes (1992a: 267), the ANC is committed to promoting affirmative action (including human resources development strategies in public and private sector organizations) within a broad framework for social and economic transformation. The ANC's (1992) *Ready to Govern: Policy Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa* sets forth the following broad aims:

- To improve the life circumstances of the oppressed people of South Africa.
- To develop children by ensuring that they receive proper nutrition and pre-school stimulation.
- To provide more flexible access to tertiary education (to redress the damage done by Bantu education at schools).
- To enable entry into occupations through competence rather than certificates.
- To give greater attention to career development planning in human resources development programmes.
- To encourage mentorship programmes, in the private sector and public service.

Like the ANC, COSATU places heavy emphasis on training and development, calling for skills development, which will create a more flexible workforce, so that skills can be transfered from one job to another. COSATU calls for training to be carried out by industry training boards, community centres and colleges, and to be linked to wages and grading. Workers should have a right to paid education and training leave.

The National Education Policy Initiative's (NEPI) *Human Resources Development Report* stresses the 'high-participation, high-skill' human resources policy proposals of the ANC and COSATU, which see education and training as crucially important for creating economic growth, democracy and equality in the new South Africa.

At the moment, neither the ANC nor COSATU proposes legislation to secure affirmative action goals.[48] However, Innes (1992a: 28) points out that policy hardly ever succeeds unless based on either incentives or pressure. In all likelihood, the ANC would apply both:

> It is very likely that, in future, companies seeking government contracts or support in any form would be expected to have coherent affirmative action strategies in place and working effectively. It is also possible that tax rebates or similar incentives may be provided to companies which show proof of progress in this sphere. In this context, it is likely that a future government would call for greater disclosure of internal information on what is being done to promote the disadvantaged within organizations.

In this view of affirmative action, the power of the state is crucial in effecting structural transformations of political and economic processes in the country. State promotion of affirmative action for social equity would provide a framework for the private sector (business, industry and social organizations) to develop and carry out.[49]

The strategies proposed in the structural change paradigm have been the subject of some criticism, voiced mainly by liberal groups and individuals, but also by progressive educators and social critics. The South African Law Commission finds the definition of affirmative action unacceptably wide and vague. Maphai (1993) and Leon (1992) observe that the proposed entrenchment of affirmative action in the constitution sets up a legal base for discrimminatory legislation, thus perpetuating the notion advanced in the apartheid era that it is appropriate to use state resources to advance certain cultures or groups over others. In this way, racial preference, rather than equality, becomes enshrined in constitutional principle.[50] Aside from the problem that affirmative action could blur, and even override other human and civil rights, it requires a high degree of state intervention in people's lives, again perpetuating one of the most obnoxious features of the apartheid era.

Leon (1992) describes the structural change concept of affirmative action as politically correct, morally defensible, but economically and socially risky. Innes (1992a: 32), too, questions whether South Africa has the financial resources to afford such a policy:

> ... in putting forward its policy proposals, the ANC is not threatening to introduce any revolutionary new strategies, but is rather building on the structures of the past that were created to facilitate white worker advancement and seeking to extend their beliefs to the black workforce. However, there is an important caveat here. While the relatively small South African economy was just able to support these benefits for white workers (at the cost, one might add, of denying them to their black counterparts), the key question is: Can the economy carry the much larger burden of extending these benefits to the much greater number of black workers? The answer is that this will not be possible for a very long time.

Critics such as Leon and Innes ask whether costly affirmative action policies will allow South Africa to compete internationally, and whether funds will be diverted to affirmative action rather than to other means of stimulating the economy and increasing productivity.

At the heart of the matter is the ANC's somewhat unproblematic articulation of the social and economic benefits to be derived from education and training, linked closely to affirmative action. Experience of affirmative action in many countries has shown that improving access to education and training by disadvantaged groups (an equalizing policy, in contrast to an equal opportunity policy) does not significantly improve the employment prospects of the disadvantaged, while racist and sexist employment practices persist. Chisholm (1992) notes that education is not, on its own, the 'crucial independent variable in the transfer of resources to the poorest'. Archer and Moll (1991) point out that qualitative improvement in schooling may be more important than quantitative improvement for long-term economic growth, employment and incomes: 'Improved access to worse schools would accomplish neither equity goals nor efficiency goals ...'

The philosophy of adult education most closely linked to this concept of affirmative action is radical adult education, which Millar (1989) has described as '... the form of education that takes most seriously problems of organization, of accountability, of historical understanding.' In essence, radical adult education is a political commitment to the organization and reorganization (or transformation) of society. Groups seeking to change the status quo perceive adult education as 'anti-structure', as an ideological weapon and resource in their struggle for liberation and social justice.[51] Once these groups have gained control, they use state power to transform the social, economic and educational systems. In this form of adult education, social change goals are high, and control rests with participants. The educator has a complex role, combining the functions of critic, learner intellectual and activist. Teachers and learners are engaged in a horizontal relationship, the dominant methodologies being experiential and dialogic, emphasizing reflective thought and action.

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented an analysis of two competing concepts of affirmative action in South Africa: the human resources development concept and the structural change concept. An orga-

nizing principle for the analysis was found in different interpretations of the problems to be addressed by affirmative action, the strategies associated with each concept, and the theoretical rationale for action. Each concept places great emphasis on education and training, although their ideas differ on the role and function of education in bringing about change. Each concept was related to a recognized adult education paradigm: the human resources development concept was likened to the technological discourse, and the structural change concept to radical adult education. Criticism of each concept, and its associated practices, was presented, and the barriers to successful implementation explored. In summary, the challenge for proponents of the human resources development concept of affirmative action might be described as: 'How to adapt to social pressure without really changing'. The challenge for the structural change paradigm is: 'How to transform society without losing integrity and impact'.

While the approach to affirmative action taken here highlights differences in outlook, there are some similarities between the two concepts. Adherents of both positions would agree that education and training, at all levels, are crucial to equalizing opportunities for hitherto disadvantaged groups; both agree that public and private sector investment in education needs to be increased; both respect some interplay between individual growth and group development; both accept the existence of ideological and institutional barriers to affirmative action.

Analysing affirmative action in this way should shed some light on the practice of adult education in South Africa. While not all adult educators may assume one stance on affirmative action, this analysis may help them to identify some of the ideological and philosophical assumptions which guide and inform their practice.

FOOTNOTES

1. In 1964 the American Congress enacted a comprehensive civil rights statute. This was the first attempt by the modern federal government to address inequalities in the employment sector.
2. The quota system calls for a specific percentage or proportion of positions, at all levels in an organization, to be filled by women or members of minority groups. The percentage stipulated is roughly equivalent to the percentage of women and minority members in the geographical community from which the employer traditionally draws its workforce. Timetables are set up to guide minority appointment and advancement within an organization or institution.
3. 'Diversity' usually refers to skin colour and gender, but may also encompass age, race, religious affiliation, sexual orientation and social class. Thomas (1990) observes that this diversity is driven partly by the legal and social strictures of affirmative action, and partly by demographics. The population of the USA is becoming more and more culturally diverse as a consequence of immigration and the relatively high birth rates of minority groups. In addition to the influence of demographics and affirmative action, American companies are struggling to compete successfully for markets and labour, both domestically and internationally, and are undergoing changes of perception about how work is done, and by whom. This trend contributes positively to the recruitment of blacks, hispanics, women and immigrants.
4. Thomas (1990) defines managing diversity as a process of getting from a heterogeneous workforce the same productivity, commitment, quality and profit that one gets from a homogeneous workforce.
5. In America, this challenge is led by a number of social movements, including the women's movement, black power and gay rights activism. Among other activities, these groups challenge white male attitudes and work-styles which still dominate most US companies.
6. Gatherer and Erickson (1992: 64) point out that the ANC, PAC and COSATU have all referred recently to a need for affirmative action. Most respondents in a 1992 survey of 23 major business organizations in South Africa identified affirmative action as one of their priorities in the 1990s.
7. In its broadest sense, 'black advancement' refers to the economic, social and political advancement of the indigenous African population, as well as 'Coloured' and Indian South Africans. In business organizations, however, the term is used to refer to the promotion of ethnic Africans from the lowest levels of organizational hierarchies into skilled, supervisory and managerial positions in predominantly white organizations (Smollan, 1986).
8. 'Social responsibility' refers to social welfare programmes for employees as well as community development activities contributing to social upliftment.
9. Rapid Africanization of the public sector negatively affected the efficiency of central and local governments and parastatal organizations in a number of countries, and has been criticized as a conservative and elitist process (NEPI *Human Resources Development Report*, 1992: 51).
10. A third concept of affirmative action, the development of new admissions procedures, and special education and support programmes to prepare students from disadvantaged groups for success in tertiary education institutions, is beyond the scope of this paper.

11. In an academic debate that spanned the 1980s Meth (1981) questioned the existence of such shortages, citing the rising level of unemployment among qualified workers in the public and private sectors, while Muller (1984), Chisholm (1983), and Chisholm and Christie (1983), argued that the skills referred to were not technical or supervisory, but socially and ideologically defined 'shortages' such as a lack of positive attitude to competitive business and capitalist development. The shortages claim, according to these writers, is a rhetorical device (or an 'ideological smokescreen') used by capital and the state to convince the general public of the necessity of restructuring the workforce for the sake of continued capital stability and prosperity. Archer and Moll (1992) have made three objections to the notion that skills shortages is a major constraint on economic growth. First, lack of education and training of the labour force in other countries does not seem to have constituted a bottleneck to their agricultural and industrial development. Second, the assumption of fixed educational requirements for jobs in different sectors (agricultural, industrial and service) is contested by the possibility of substitution and choice. Third, manpower predictions and planning associated with this view have been overtaken by the output of the education system; the economy fails to deliver jobs in sufficient volume to match the outflow from schools, not the reverse. Kraak (1989), however, maintains that the introduction of advanced technologies, for example pneumatics, hydraulics, computerization and electronics, has resulted in a range of new, highly skilled occupations in which real shortages of qualified personnel have been experienced, not only at the technical/artisan level, but in terms of managerial, supervisory and human relations skills. Whatever the merits of these opposing arguments, it is clear that that the skills shortage viewpoint 'has a grip on the technocratic mind as well as a plausibility sufficient to satisfy interest groups like employers' (Archer and Moll, 1992: 9).
12. See, for example, the popular video and text presentations by Sunter (1987); a supplement to the *Financial Mail* of 15 February 1991, entitled 'Black Advancement: A Survey'; and recent scholarly works by Hofmeyr and Templer (1992), and Human (1991).
13. This shortage may be attributed to both demographic trends and social factors. Hofmeyr and Templer (1992) summarize the demographic trends as follows: 3 500 children are born every day in South Africa; nine out of ten of these children are black. In 1992, white people comprised 14,4 %t of the population; by 2000 this is expected to be 12,2% percent. Eighty-six percent of people joining the labour force during the 1990s will be African, Coloured or Asian.

    Social factors contributing to the skills shortage are the emmigration from South Africa of white professionals, entrepreneurs and artisans; the introduction of advanced technologies (for example computers) which require specially trained personnel; and the partial dismantling of the racist division of labour, which has meant that jobs previously reserved for whites are now legally open to blacks.

    Human and van Zyl (1982) note the shortage of workers at supervisory and middle management levels in South Africa, citing one manager for every 42 workers. Corresponding figures for the UK and USA are much lower, the nearest comparison being Australia where the ratio is 1:11.

14. See, for example, Godsell and Buys (1992) who argue that '... social contributions are made necessary, as they are made possible, by business executing its primary economic role'.
15. As Hofmeyr and Templer (1992: 208-9) point out, this is not a climate conducive to affirmative action and management development, which require a longer range vision and considerable investment.
16. Schaffer (1984: 195) notes a 'diffuse, yet powerful theme' in the capital-state reform discourse of the late 1970s and 1980s which called for training to nurture positive attitudes among blacks towards competitive business and the capitalist financial milieux. The incorporation of the more privileged and better-educated strata of the black working class into a black middle class, with vested interests in the free enterprise system, was expected to promote social and political stability while leading to expansion of lucrative domestic and commercial commodity markets with consequent benefits for industry.
17. However, Moulder (1988) refers to research indicating that white South African managers reflect pragmatic value orientations (the theoretic, economic and political) but are weak on humane or social values.
18. This is often a legacy of the Sullivan and EEC Codes of the 1980s, which set non-discriminatory codes of conduct and black recruitment targets for the South African branches of multinational corporations.
19. Archer and Moll (1992: 11) observe that a direct relationship between years of schooling and economic rate of return is affected by many other influences, such as the pattern of demand for skilled labour, capital investment across industries with different occupational structures, changes in technology affecting the demand for skilled labour, and the effectiveness of collective bargaining institutions and policies. These influences are so ubiquitous that a causal relationship between educational investment and rate of return is obscured.
20. Job reservation, restrictions on free trade areas, migrant labour policies and restrictions on organized labour, all contributed to the exclusion of blacks from positions of power and influence in South Africa's economy until the mid-1980s when the government of P.W. Botha began the process of dismantling apartheid legislation which has continued under President F.W. de Klerk. See Smollan (1986) for an account of the legislation and its consequences for black advancement.
21. For example, Charoux (in Smollan, 1986) complains that 'Even at managerial level, blacks begin their careers ... handicapped by a low level of literacy, an under-developed ability to apply theory practically, and difficulties in communicating both verbally and in writing'.
22. See Coldwell and Moerdyk (1981), whose influential study postulated dissonant cultural paradigms for traditional (black) people and Western-oriented (white) people, with negative effects on black managerial performance.
23. This marginality is partly a consequence of black managers' psychosocial isolation at the workplace (there are often not enough people of the same race group to provide a feeling of belonging or support), and partly a consequence of the diverse and conflicting environments in which black people live and work (Human, 1991). Jones (1986) notes that black managers often lack the informal networks and co-operative relationships which white managers rely on at work.

24. Hofmeyr (1988) reports that most white employees hold negative stereotypes of blacks, believing them to be lazy and dishonest, while Human and Hofmeyr (1987) found that many whites expressed the belief that blacks are inherently inferior to whites. Citing a 1986 study, Frank (1987) offers examples of overt discrimination and covert resistance to black advancement, including biased appraisals, subverting grievance procedures and setting people up for failure.
25. See, for example, Alperson's (1992) survey of five South African companies' affirmative action policies, and McGregor's (1992) recommendations for 'holistic' affirmative action programmes.
26. Hofmeyr and Templer (1992) trace back such programmes to McClelland's 1961 model of achievement training which is based on the argument that African employees are 'affiliation-oriented' rather than achievement-oriented.
27. Reuel Khosa (1987) has called these 'white advancement programmes'.
28. See Lurie (1992) for an account of the value-sharing workshops conducted at the P.G. Bison company. Both Human (1991) and McGregor (1992) believe that affirmative action programmes should not be the preserve of human resources managers, but form part of wider corporate objectives, supported vigorously by senior management. Human (1993) points out that successful affirmative action depends on line managers' preparedness to recruit, develop and promote blacks, which a human resources development department cannot do.
29. Alperson (1992) and McGregor (1992) describe efforts to publish affirmative action principles in ways that make them accessible to all employees in an organization.
30. Alperson (1992: 62), reporting on Grinaker's affirmative action policy, mentions the practise of 'seeding', in which externally recruited graduates are appointed to 'hard' positions at junior management level and provided with a support system through mentoring and other forms of follow-up. This is fairly common in North America.
31. The main concern of a 'learning organization' is to create an environment in which the learning of all employees is encouraged. Learning is seen to be the responsibility of individuals in the organization, with the company providing resources, stimuli and support. Job rotation, project work, experimentation, action learning and coaching are strategies associated with learning organizations (Birkenbach and Hofmeyr, 1990)
32. Bowmaker-Falconer (1993: 13) claims that most corporate affirmative action activities centre around the circulation of an available pool of black managers, rather than on the task of developing managers in significantly greater numbers.
33. Human (1993: 34) observes that, in many organizations, development has not been well understood or instituted, and that too little pressure is put on managers to coach and develop subordinates or to acquire the skills to do this.
34. International norms for training and development are 6 to 8% of total remuneration, while in South Africa companies are spending an average of 1,5% (Bowmaker-Falconer, 1993: 14).
35. Human (1993: 35) criticizes the tacit acceptance of dual corporate development systems in which the development of lower-level workers tends to stop at supervisory positions, while managers are not generally promoted from the ranks of supervisors.

36. Darkenwald and Merriam (1982: 68-9) cite measures of accountability, behavioural change, behavioural objectives, systems approaches and programmed instruction as some of the manifestations of behaviourism in organization-sponsored education. They also note that techniques and strategies with a more humanistic orientation are used to foster individual growth and development.
37. Archer and Moll (1992: 2) point out that 'education is in danger of being oversold by some political reformers as a route out of apartheid's neglect and inequity through human resources development', while scepticism about education's capacity in social transformation is evident in Nasson and Samuel (1990: 2): 'Education on its own cannot achieve redistributive miracles by spreading income and wealth among the poor. At best, equality of access to education can be seen as equating opportunities for eventual inequalities in life chances and rewards'. Many theorists argue that, because schools reproduce capitalism, and are themselves part of a much broader social formation, they cannot, by themselves, bring changes in social and economic relations.
38. Maphai (1993) believes that the term 'affirmative action' should be discarded for the wider concept, arguing that concerns about inequality, reconstruction and poverty are, or should be, features of a responsible government, and are 'too important to be couched in expressions such as affirmative action'.
39. Langa (1992: 31), for example, believes that '... affirmative action must go beyond positive discrimination in favour of the black community as a whole, to a deliberate bias in favour of the most disadvantaged sections of this community', while Bird (1993) declares that racism and sexism need to be dealt with in the context of unemployment and low wages.
40. For example, the ANC's affirmative action policy is aimed at 'people who were discriminated against in the work situation' in the apartheid era, and thus extends beyond black people to include women and the disabled. In practice, however, ANC strategy aims at black advancement (Innes, 1992a: 25).
41. See the ANC's (1992) *Ready to Govern: ANC Policy Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa and Draft Education Policy*
42. See, for example, Samuel (1992) who blames Apartheid for an ideologically corrupt education system and 15 years of disrupted schooling.
43. See, for example, papers by Motala (1992), Maphai (1989 and 1992) and working papers of the NEPI *Human Resources Development Report* (1992).
44. Brookfield (1993: 64-5) observes that a tradition of progressive liberalism, epistemologically contradictory to radical tradition, sees critical theory as an exploration of theory-practice connections and discrepancies, and on helping educators clarify their own implicit, informal theories.
45. Papers by Motala (1992) and Mtuku (1992) establish a critical framework for affirmative action, but do not analyse corporate provision or practice.
46. Barker (1992) notes that the South African labour market is characterized by severe inequalities which may be divided into four categories: education, employment, wages, and occupational status.
47. Two principles underlie this proposal:
    1) Equal protection for all under the law (governing employment, housing, and access to public facilities); and

2) Equal distribution of government funds (to balance disparities between black/white, rural/urban spending).

48. Innes (1992a: 28) observes that the ANC is concerned about the impact such quotas could have on business efficiency, and on its relationship with the business community, while COSATU fears that quotas would force companies to recruit from outside the organization rather than training and developing its own members, who are often COSATU members.
49. An alternative proposal for transforming the formal economic sector may be seen in the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce's (NAFCOC) advocacy of black ownership, management and operation of business. In 1991, it set the following targets, to be met within the next 10 years:
    - All companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange must have at least 30% of their board members drawn from the black community.
    - At least 40% of their share-holdings must be controlled by the black community.
    - At least 50% of the value of their outside purchases must come from black suppliers and contractors.
    - At least 60% of their top managerial personnel must come from the black community.
50. Maphai (1993: 7) observes that affirmative action entails 'dubious criteria of reward (race and gender) one of which has always been regarded as the most obnoxious feature of apartheid'.
51. Freire and Brookfield, both associated with radical adult education, believe that the education system, as presently constituted, is inadequate as a tool for social change. Education must itself be transformed from that which perpetuates the social order to that which challenges the social system and thus liberates. Adult education, which stands outside the formal education system, is an appropriate site (and vehicle) for changing people's consciousness, and preparing them for more active roles in society.

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A REFLECTION ON CACE'S CHALLENGING RACISM WORK.

(This is a working paper)

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INTRODUCTION

One of the key issues which South Africans face in the 1990s is how to overcome the legacies of racism, sexism and authoritarianism. How, and in what way, should adult educators in the South African context contribute to the process of transformation to a non-racial, non-sexist, democractic society? This question has become especially important given the key task of reconstruction within South African society.

This paper reflects on efforts by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE), at the University of the Western Cape, to contribute to combating racism. I feel that it is important to deal with the issue of racism because, as educators, we find ourselves in educational institutions and situations where we can contribute to patterns of racial domination. However, it is also important to state that adult education has a limited role to play in the process of transformation and should be seen as one of multiple strategies on political, economic, ideological and cultural levels that are required to bring about meaningful change in the position of oppressed people.

The aim of this paper is to reflect critically on CACE's challenging racism[1] work over the last three years, and to discuss ways of improving this. CACE developed and ran anti-racism, awareness-raising workshops, and trained educators to run challenging racism workshops. I will describe what has been done over the last three years and, in the process, explore the underlying assumptions of the challenging racism work and identify some of the problems experienced. In conclusion, I shall point to possiblities for improvement.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

This section sketches the challenging racism work done over the last three years and outlines the content of a challenging racism workshop that was designed for the training of facilitators.

Background

With the changes which happened within South Africa from 1990, and the subsequent decision by the major political players to negotiate a more equal dispensation, it became important to consider the role of a centre like CACE in social reconstruction and, in particular, in contributing more directly to challenging racism within South African society. A key question which we have identified is: How do we change structures that will be left intact as well as the general

racist, sexist and authoritarian South African mindset? We realised that challenging racism is a very complex process, as racism is part of an interlocking system of domination which includes sex, 'race' [2], culture and class. Any strategy attempting to bring about change has to work with the specificity of the intersection of 'race' with gender, culture and class, in different localities, and at different historical moments.

From our own experience, and in consulting with various groups and organisations, we discovered that there were relatively few adult educators who had the skills and the knowledge to address racism directly in educational programmes. CACE felt that it would be important to develop models for educating adult educators to challenge issues of racism, sexism and authoritarian practices through specific participatory methodologies (CACE Proposal, 1989).

Thus, in 1990, a number of workshops were held focusing on gender and, in 1991, we focused on racism. Over the last three years, CACE has set up a programme for training adult educators to learn facilitation of workshops that challenge racism. A network of people interested in supporting each other, sharing information, experience, expertise and resources was also established.

The process used to train Adult Educators at CACE

When we set out to train facilitators for the challenging racism workshops, we wanted to start running workshops for experienced facilitators. However, we realised that very few people had been exposed to this kind of work before. CACE staff members had been exposed to the work of Margaret Legum (a South African living in England) and the Organisational Development Consultants (OSDC) through a workshop organised by the Centre for Intergroup Studies based at the University of Cape Town. We felt that the OSDC model of understanding racism was very useful if a number of changes could be made to take into account that we work with a majority 'black' audience. Through a two-day workshop, which was used to critique the OSDC model, we developed a strategy of, firstly, running a workshop for people interested in understanding racism, a much broader audience than facilitators. The second phase would then be to identify people interested in being trained to run challenging racism workshops. For this audience we would design and run a facilitators' training programme (FTP).

After the first FTP, it became clear the participants did not feel confident enough to run challenging racism workshop on their own. We then instituted a mentoring system so that participants could co-design and co-facilitate workshops until they were confident enough to do this work on their own.

In summary then, the process of educating adult educators and facilitators that developed over the last three years included the following steps:

- A three to five day workshop introducing participants to understanding how racism works;
- A facilitator's training programme (FTP); and
- A period of co-designing and co-facilitation, with the help of more experienced facilitators.

Participants were also given support through the establishment of a network. Network members receive a newsletter three times a year and meetings, seminars and workshops are organised to share information, experiences and deepen understanding of this work.

The challenging racism workshops have largely attracted participants from community, civic, religious, service and women's organisations, and the University of the Western Cape. Sectors

that organisations represented included literacy, pre-school, health, church, culture, education and resources and women. Urban and rural groups were represented, although the majority of participants came from the urban areas. From the university, participants included staff as well as students. The majority of the participants were 'black'. 'Black' is used inclusively to refer to all people who are classified 'coloured', 'Indian' and 'black'[3].

The Introductory Workshop

The aim of the introductory workshop was to identify people who would be interested in being trained specifically to do challenging racism workshops. In the introductory workshop through a mixture of experiential exercises, providing information and intense, small-group discussion, participants are introduced to an understanding of racism and ways to challenge it. This workshop is normally geared to a broad audience who:

- Have a personal interest and commitment to taking up racism as an issue;
- Want to develop personal and professional skills; and
- Want to build a network beyond the workshop.

(CACE Workshop Brochure, October 1990: 3).

The initial workshop is divided into three main parts: a section of trust-building, developing an understanding of racism, and developing specific ways of challenging racism on personal and structural levels.

The first part of the workshop tries to build trust. The underlying assumption here is that, during the workshop, participants will share information that is quite personal, and they can only do this if there is sufficient trust and confidentiality built into the workshop process.

The second part of the workshop provides an understanding of how racism works. Racism is defined as the practice of discrimination by a defined group, who hold a common ideology of superiority, and who have the power to systematically institutionalise it against a group of people on the basis of their common origin and/or skin colour. In explaining how racism works, one specific approach was adopted: i.e. looking at the inter-relationship of the components during the practice of racism. The theoretical assumption that we base our work on is that if participants understand the make-up of racism, they will find it easier to challenge and combat. Essentially, the approach is to support workshop participants to work against different kinds of oppression (Zanda, 1992).

According to the theoretical assumption referred to above, the four main components operative in the practice of racism are: attitudes, personal and institutional power, discrimination, and an ideology that assumes superiority. Attitudes refer to lasting, general evaluations of people (including oneself), objects, or issues. Power is a difficult concept to define, because its meaning is being contested, but it may be seen as the ability to maintain control over resources and people. Ideology is also a contested term and is used in a very restricted sense to refer to ways in which meaning (signification) serves to create and sustain power relations of domination (Foster, 1991:5).

These four components are built up in this understanding of racism. For example, we explain that any person can use their personal power to act on specific attitudes. If the negative attitude is 'race' based, the discrimination practised will be racial discrimination. Discrimination is there-

fore seen as the acting-out of positive or negative attitudes, which respectively either advantage or disadvantage a person or group. Discrimination can be practised directly, indirectly or through inaction. People from the oppressed and dominant groups can practise racial discrimination.

An act is considered racist when a person belonging to the dominant group, which usually controls the institutions of society, and which holds the ideology of superiority, discriminates negatively against a person from the oppressed group. Racism, then, can occur at personal or interpersonal levels, group levels and structural levels.

The second theoretical assumption is that if participants have pride in who they are, they will be better able to fight racism, personally and politically, from either the dominant or oppressed position. In order to develop this pride, emphasis is placed on the value of culture, difference and identity, rather on the social contruction of 'race'. The notion of developing pride in who you are is particularly important given the historical effect of oppression on 'black' people which has evoked feelings of self-rejection and shame. On the other hand 'white' people show feelings of guilt about who they are. It is emphasised that one person's background or heritage should not be seen as better or worse than any other person's.

Underlying the first assumption is the notion that a person who is more aware and empowered as an individual is more likely to fight against racism. Thereby the personal becomes the political. To achieve this balance, between the personal and the structural, the design of the workshop balances personal/emotional discovery with strategies for social change in the community at large. The key assumption is that racism is learnt and therefore can be unlearnt. If racism is therefore not innate, but embedded within the political, economic and social structures of society, individuals and groups have the ability to resist racism and can unlearn it. The unlearning process experientially connects life events to the information presented, so that participants are given space to speak about the connections and have personal experiences affirmed and then validated, through acknowledgement of how those experiences fit a societal frame.

The third section of the workshop is devoted to analysing specific examples of racism, fro example, within organisations, institutions or on a personal level. Different interest groups develop specific strategies to deal with the chosen instances of racism. Time is also given to practise the different strategies developed. For example, out of one of the workshops, a universities group emerged which challenged UWC to take up the issue of racism on an institutional basis. Another group decided to monitor adverts and to write letters to the South African Broadcasting Corporation. Participants are also introduced to the different groups and resources which are available to provide support after the workshop, when they go back to their different organisations or work contexts.

Our experience in workshops has been as we anticipated, that racism is a deeply emotional topic, and painful and sensitive feelings are evoked in discussing and learning about it. On the one hand 'white' participants experience a lot of guilt, while there may be shame and anger from 'black' participants. In developing the challenging racism workshops and the FTP, we used co-counselling (derived from Harvey Jackin's Re-evaluation Counselling) as a means of dealing with these emotions (Zanda, 1992).

People who attended the initial workshop and are interested in committing themselves to facilitate challenging racism workshop are invited to a facilitators training programme (FTP).

The Facilitators' Training Programme (FTP)

The Facilitators' Training Programme (FTP) was designed to deepen the theoretical understanding of racism and how it works, to do personal emotional work, and to practise design and facilitation of the most difficult parts of the challenging racism workshop. Facilitators need to know the different concepts of racism that potential audiences may have. For example, different political groups have conflicting views and strategies on how to tackle the issue of racism.

The audience for the FTP is usually made up of people who have facilitation experience. Participants are required to set up three workshops, which they co-design and facilitate with the help of a experienced facilitator. The rationale for this is our experience that people, in general, don't feel confident to go out and do challenging racism workshops after the initial training, and that they need more support after the FTP. Specific mechanisms for providing feedback are worked out between the experienced facilitator and 'trainees'.

As facilitators, it is essential to be comfortable with the issue and know that personal emotions on racism need not block effective facilitation. In order to work in an ethical manner on the issue of racism, it is essential that facilitators are clear enough about their own emotional responses to racism to secure the workshop from further perpetuation of racism. Towards this end, FTP members use quite a lot of co-counselling throughout the training. Very positive feedback from FTP participants has been received on the use of the co-counselling technique.

People who choose and are permitted to join the FTP are usually committed to doing this kind of work, given the complexity and the emotionality both for the participants and facilitator. We feel that it is important for the facilitator to believe in the principle of working against racism and to want to be part of its eradication. The facilitator should also be willing to work against personal prejudicial attitudes, so as to avoid perpetuating discrimination during workshops, as well as clarifying their own emotional responses to racism and oppression.

Ongoing support is provided through a network newsletter, which is used to share different methodologies employed by various adult educators. Seminars are also organised from time to time, to discuss specific issues relevant to the network. Ongoing support, we feel, can counteract the despondency that can set in when dealing with such a complex issue as racism.

In summary, this section has outlined the different stages of how we have trained adult educators to do challenging racism workshops. The next section reflects on some of the issues and problems experienced in developing and setting up this training.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES ENCOUNTERED

This section attempts to identify the areas of controversy and point to ways of dealing with the issues. It also makes some tentative suggestions on how to move forward with CACE's own work.

The two main issues that we have been confronted with, relate to our theoretical model for understanding racism. Firstly, some people raised the issue of the personal versus structural change. How much focus should there be on personal attitutudes? Participants, in general, find it difficult to work through personal issues and tend to resist this part of the workshop. Secondly, the workshop model suggests that 'black' people cannot be racist, while all 'white' people are seen to be racist. The question posed is: What about people of Jewish origin? How does the model explain racism within the 'white' community?

Personal change versus structural change

In viewing approaches to the question of 'race', there are some which can be considered to focus on personal work and some which can be considered to focus on structural work. I will briefly outline some of the approaches falling within this spectrum, and where CACE's work could be placed.

The approaches to combating racism can be divided roughly on the basis of what is considered to be the problem, or, in other words, on how racism is defined. At one end of the spectrum, racism can be viewed as an attitudinal or individual problem. At the other end, it can be seen as an oppressive system (Kritzinger, 1992: 3).

Theoretical Overview

Racism defined as personal prejudice has its foundations in social psychology, which argues that racial prejudice manifests itself only occasionally in the behaviour of a few isolated individuals. Prejudice is presented as an individual, irrational response which originates from ignorance. Prejudice can be defined as an attitude (usually negative) towards the members of some group based solely on the membership of that group. Sarup (1991: 55), in tracing the historical context in which the concept of prejudice developed, suggests that this concept is built on 'the belief in rationality as an ideal for democratic society and the emphasis on the individual as the site of the breakdown of this rationality'. Some writers make a distinction between prejudice and stereotyping. Prejudice 'thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant', is thus based on the belief that distortion occurs when a person makes a judgement prematurely. Stereotyping on the other hand, produces inaccurate judgements through a tendency to attribute characteristics supposedly belonging to a group. It is believed that these generalisations are natura,l common capacities of the human mind.

Little attention has been given to the fact that prejudice is a product of the total organisation of society, and is to be changed only as that society is changed. Foster (1991: 21) argues that little attention has been given to the source of such attitudes, other than the mechanisms of socialization. It is only in recent years that the individualised view of attitudes has been challenged from a number of directions. Most theorists of this individualised framework believe that prejudice can be corrected with the provision of accurate information (Sarup, 1991: 55). Strategies to provide people with the correct information may sometimes involve 'bringing the races' together to meet and talk to each other.

At the other end of the spectrum, racism is seen to be linked to capitalism. A number of writers have theorised the specific link between 'race' and class (Mason, 1990: 9). Marxist scholars insist that race is merely one manifestation of more fundamental class struggles, while non-Marxist scholars have argued for an independent, causal role for 'race' (Mason, 1990: 9). Racism, for example, is defined by the Cape Action League (CAL) as: 'Racial prejudice linked to the structures and practices that perpetuate the exploitation of one group of people by another .... Racism involves the domination of one group of people by another' (Eraser, 1990: 32). Racism is seen, from this perspective, as integrally linked with the capitalist system of exploitation and domination. The term often used to describe this view is 'racial capitalism'. It theorises that racism will only be eliminated when capitalism is replace by a socialist system. What is necessary to eliminate racism, is to attack exclusively the institutions within society which per-

petuate racial capitalism. This understanding of racism focuses explicitly on bringing about structural change, and it is assumed that a focus on the personal will not make a difference to society. The task of 'anti-racism' workshops is to unite the different sections of the 'black' working class in order to assist them in bringing about a socialist transformation.

Other theorists, notably Gabriel and Ben-Tovin, Hall, and Miles, writing from a Marxist point of view, suggest different links between race and class. For example, Gabriel and Ben-Tovim argue for a autonomous model. They posit that:

> Racism has its autonomous formation, its own contradictory determinations, its own complex mode of theoretical and ideological production, as well as its repercussions for the class struggle at the levels of the economy and the state.

(Gabriel and Ben-Tovim as quoted in Solomos, 1990: 96).

In this view, the ideological level is primary, since it is only after ideological production of racist ideologies that they intervene at the level of the economy and political practice. Starting from the position that the state as an institution is not monolithic, but a site of constant struggles, compromises and administrative decisions, they argue that the most important task of research on 'race' is to highlight the political and ideological context in which anti-racist struggles occur.

Stuart Hall , however, argues for a relative autonomy model and attempts to develop an analytic framework which locates racism in historically-specific social relations, while allowing a degree of autonomy of the racial aspects of society. He makes this clear by arguing that:

> There is as yet no adequate theory of racism which is capable of dealing with the economic and structural features of such societies, while at the same time giving a historically concrete and sociologically specific account of distinctive racial aspects.

(As quoted in Solomos, 1990: 90)

Hall, attempting to develop a more critical and multi-dimensional, materialist analysis of the phenomenon, suggests three principles for a critical Marxist analysis of racism. Firstly, he rejects the idea that racism is a general feature of all human societies, arguing that what actually exist are historically specific racisms. Though there may be features common to all racially structured societies, it is necessary to understand what produces these features in each specific situation, before one can develop a comparative analysis of racism. The second principle is that, although racism cannot be reduced to other social relations, one cannot explain racism in abstraction. Racism has a relative autonomy from other relations, whether they be economic, political or ideological. The relative autonomy means that there is no one-way correspondence between racism and specific economic or other forms of social relations. Thirdly, Hall criticises a dichotomous view of 'race' and 'class' arguing that, in a racially structured society, it is impossible to understand them through discrete modes of analysis. 'Race' has a concrete impact on the class consciousness and organisation of all classes and class factions. But "class", in turn, has a reciprocal relationship with 'race', and it is the articulation between the two which is crucial, not their separateness (Solomos, 1990: 92).

Miles, writing from a Marxist perspective, puts forward a more flexible relationship between 'race' and 'class', called the migrant labour model (Solomos, 1990: 98). Miles' approach is sig-

nificant in reinforcing the theoretical trend over recent decades to regard ideology as analytically autonomous from other processes, such as class structure. The precise link has to be established in particular historical conjunctures. He defines racism as an ideology: a representation of the other in terms of negatively evaluative content. Racism is held to be a specific discourse involving (i) particular representations of real or imagined somatic features, and (ii) attributions of negatively evaluated characteristics (Foster, 1991: 4). In light of recent writings, this definition could be extended in at least two ways: racism involves the representations of self as well as the other, and refers to differences rather than merely negatively evaluated content. Miles' full conceptual scheme involves an analytic distinction between racism as ideology and three other closely related sets of processes: racialisation, institutional racism and ideological articulation (Miles, 1989: 97). For him, racism is an ideology which represents the other in terms of negatively evaluative content. Racialisation is a process of signification (an ideological process) whereby social significance is attached to human features, providing a basis for social categorisation and a justification for inclusion/exclusion. Institutional racism refers to particular circumstances where racism is involved in exclusionary (and discriminatory) practices. Ideological articulation refers to the overlapping, juxtaposing, continguity and inter-relationship between ideologies.

Ideology is a highly contested term. It is used in a restricted and critical sense, derived from its Marxist heritage to refer to ways in which meaning serves to create and sustain power relations of domination (see Foster, 1991). In this view, ideology is not just any systematic organisation of ideas, nor does it refer to the popularized notion of false consciousness. In addition, ideology should not be limited to ideas, attitudes, beliefs or values. It also involves language, sign systems and actions. Since language constitutes, in part, what is real, the notions of ideology as pure illusion or as false consciousness should be resisted. Ideologies are not static, but transformed historically, and are reproduced and challenged in everyday discourse. Individuals should not be seen as the blind bearers of a received ideological tradition. For Billig, the notion of lived ideology, or what passes for common sense in the everyday world, involves argument, rhetoric, debate and dilemmas. Similarly, for Therborn, the ideological is in constant state of dynamic movement: 'competing, clashing, affecting, drowning and silencing one another' and involving an evergrowing formation and reformation of subjective identities (1980: 102).

Secondly, ideology is closely implicated in the formation of subjectivity, – taken here to refer to the internal experience of a person. In relation to this constitution of human subjectivity it is often forgotten that ideologies frequently work in powerful ways because they are able to tap into emotions. This emotionality of ideologies is frequently ignored (Foster and Louw-Potgieter, 1990).

CACE's Position

From the outline of the different approaches, it seems that the CACE definition of racism indeed falls within the category of ideology. However, it also appears that the definition contains some elements of individual notions by focusing on individual attitudes and individual change. Secondly, power is defined as a possession and not a relationship. This allows prejudice to be emphasised as an attitude rather than discrimination as a type of behaviour (Sarup, 1992: 57). This understanding of racism thus allows individual facilitators to sometimes stress the personal

change and emotional aspects and leave out the institutional aspects of racism. However, it is important to note that defining racism as an ideology can take into account the deeply emotional aspect of racism. For example, a number of people from progressive movements, with a history of stressing non-racism, have found the workshops helpful in coming to terms with some of their deep-seated feelings of prejudice. They suggest that working to bring institutional change does not necessarily change their prejudice. This idea has been recognised by some people who criticised the CACE workshop for focusing on the individual, and suggested that personal attitude is an area that needs exploration without making it the exclusive focus of challenging racism work. It seems to me that the heavy focus on the personal aspects needs to be critically examined and the institutional aspects of racism stressed, especially in the South African situation where racism is found embedded in political, economic and social institutions. It is important not do away with this, given the audiences with which we work and who have committed themselves to a non-racial society. Here, Robert Miles' work is useful because his theory allows for racism to be clearly defined as an ideology which includes the personal, emotional aspects as well as the idea of institutional racism which deals with structural aspects.

Can Blacks be racist?

A position taken, for example, by Zanda (1992), in the explanation of racism, is that 'white' people can practise racism while 'black' people cannot be racist. The explanation given for this position is that, in order for racism to be practised, a group must have control over the political, economic and social institutions. There is a recognition that 'black' people can be prejudiced and can practise discrimination on an individual level, but do not control the major institutions of society. A second argument which is used to justify the position that 'black' people cannot be racist, is that they are not responsible for the origin of racism, which originated in Western Europe. The first assumption here, is that it seems that racism is identified as the determinant of the continuous domination of 'black' people by 'white'. The second assumption is that all 'black' people and 'white'people respectively constitute single undifferentiated groups.

The CACE workshops take into account other divisions within society, namely gender, class, age, and rural and urban factors, and do not assume that 'black' and 'white' are the only divisions. However, stating that 'black' people cannot be racist, based on access to institutional power, suggests that the possiblity exists that 'black' people can become racist when they assume institutional power. The question which can be posed then is: What about homeland leaders and tricameral parliament? Don't they have some form of institutional power?

The second assumption that 'black' is an undifferentiated group is very problematic within the South African context, given the years of differentiation and differential power given to 'Coloureds' and 'Indians' under apartheid. Within the workshops the question has been raised when we divided people into 'black' and 'white' groups whether there should be a group for people classified 'coloured'. The dilemma that this raises is that, on the one hand, the facilitators can be accused of creating apartheid divisions and, on the other hand, not recognising the material differences which developed under apartheid.

The third issue of seeing racism merely as a 'black' and 'white' issue, is that racism within the 'white' community cannot be explained. Miles, in fact, makes a distinction between theories of racism which utilise a colonial model (specific to the domination of 'white' over 'black') and

European racism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Miles, 1989: 68). He argues that a colonial model has little scope to explain much of European racism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and certainly not the form of racism which can be called anti-Semitism. He mentions that the 'Irish' in Britain during the nineteeth century were widely seen as a distinctive 'race', certain European populations in the United States of America in the early twentieth, like Italian, Polish, Russian and Jewish immigrants were considered to be different 'races' and inferior to other 'races' from British, German and Scandinavian stock, and anti-Semitism in the nineteeth century (Miles, 1989: 58).

Mkwanazi and Carrim (1992) argue that South Africa has moved from a context of old-fashioned racism to that of modern racism. Old-fashioned forms of racism have in common the overt acceptance of 'blacks' as less than equal to 'whites'. With modern racism they suggest that: ' the character of racial prejudice in a given context has changed. It is when people use non-race related reasons to continue to deny blacks equal access to opportunity. Modern racism is not explicit, not obvious' (Mkwanazi and Carrim, 1992:2). Forms of institutional racism exist either as cultural assertions of identification or protection of particular class patterns of life. It also manifests itself in personal and interpersonal forms. Personal racism includes the following:

- Personal attitudes/acts that perpetuate inequalities on the basis of 'race';
- Values, attitudes and behaviours that have been learned or internalized either directly or indirectly; and
- The maintenance of conscious or unconscious attitudes and feelings, regarding the inferiority or differences of another group (Mkwanazi and Carrim, 1992: 20).

They also reach the conclusion that there is the need to sophisticate our understanding of racism.

'Racism is not simply a white vs black issue. There are variations in experiences of racism within the black group and gradations of racism among them too. As a result, the tendency to homogenize all black people into the category of black crucifies the phenomenon of racism but also obfuscates the precise racist dynamics within the black population itself. It is only through a complex concept of racism that modern racism patterns within White, Indian and coloured schools in South Africa are understandable. They want to use the concept of ethnos to move away from issues of just pigmentation, to a consideration of the interaction between class/culture/religion/ethnicity and race' (Mkwanazi and Carrim, 1992: 21).

Perhaps, proposing that only 'white' people can be racist, may entrench the feelings of guilt. Is this the best way to effect change? It would thus be important to develop a theoretical model that takes into account the abovementioned issues. The answer may lie in the notion of racism as an ideology which separates the discourse from practices. This, however, should be more fully explored.

CONCLUSION

This paper argues that the changing political context raises questions regarding the role of adult education in contributing to the establishment of a non-racial, non-sexist democratic South Africa. In describing CACE's work in challenging racism, the paper has identified a number of problems in the theoretical understanding of racism. This paper further suggests that these issues

should be explored, debated and discussed in terms of the conceptual framework developed by Robert Miles, where he separates ideological discourse from institutional practices, and allows for ideological articulation (where racism, sexism and nationalism can overlap). This is an idea that needs much exploration, debate and discussion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

1. The term 'challenging racism' is used because it is a neutral term. Terms like 'non-racism' and 'anti-racism' have a long political history, linked to specific political groups. The workshops were designed to be as inclusive of different political persuasions as possible.
2. The term 'race' is placed in quotation marks because we there is enough scientific evidence indicating that people cannot be categorised according to physical characteristics. There is only one 'race' – the human 'race'.
3. The use of the terms 'black' and 'white' is part of the paradigm of 'race'. These terms are also placed in quotations.

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ACCREDITATION OF COURSES

INTEGRATING ADULT EDUCATION FOR CREDIT INTO THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION PROGRAMMES FOR ADULT EDUCATION PRACTICE IN LESOTHO

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INTRODUCTION

Universities in the southern African region, as is indeed the case elsewhere, have a pressing adult education function to perform, even within the contexts of needs and expectations at the national level.

This paper intends to discuss certification in adult education, with specific reference to University-based credit adult education programmes at the National University of Lesotho (NUL). In the mid-1980s NUL, through the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies (IEMS), initiated part-time credit adult education programmes at certificate and diploma levels. The clientele categories in these programmes have included public health nurses, agricultural extension workers, 'social workers', school teachers and members of the armed forces. It is worth noting that for the day-to-day operations in their respective work environments, these participants work with adult community members. Thus, for all of them (without exception) adult education skills constitute an appropriate tool. However, since turning out the programmes' first graduates in 1987, a serious problem of 'non-recognition' of the newly acquired knowledge and skills by employers, both in government and non-governmental organisations, has emerged. The official recognition sought would have taken the form of tangible rewards, such as increase in salaries or promotions on the job. This problem is more serious among school teachers.

This paper, therefore, argues that given this reluctance to recognise the adult education qualifications, it could perhaps be more advantageous to work at adopting an 'integrative/integrated approach in the training for adult education practice in Lesotho. This could be effected through incorporating the vital adult education components for credit into the initial professional preparation programmes for nurses, teachers and others. It is hoped that, in this way, the requisite recognition of the appropriate adult education content would be duly accorded with the overall recognition of the specific relevant professional qualification simultaneously.

The paper has been organised so that the first part gives a brief historical background to the NUL's initial involvement in extension and adult education work, and the subsequent University's rationale for introducing part-time credit adult education programmes. The second part gives the highlights in respect of categories of participants and levels of participation in the current programmes. The third section of the paper concentrates on the proposition that there is need to integrate the major adult education components into the formal professional preparation

programmes of intending adult education practitioners, such as teachers, nurses and other extension workers. A specific case here is being made in respect of teacher preparation programmes at NUL, and by its affiliates such as the National Teacher Training College (NTTC), National Health Training Centre (NHTC) and the Lesotho Agricultural College (LAC). An attempt will be made to show the relevance of this to the practice of teaching within the Lesotho context. The paper will finally highlight some suggestions on the content and how it could be integrated. It will also speculate on some of the possible hurdles that attempts to implement this integrative approach would have to tackle, and how best they could be handled.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREDIT ADULT EDUCATION INITIATIVES AT NUL

Literature on University-based adult education does indicate that, over the years, Universities have had to undergo a change of emphasis in their operational orientation. And on the basis of locally negotiated initiatives, shift ground in the focus of their work, in response to the needs demands, and expectations of the societies they serve. NUL has been no exception in this regard.

The idea of the University 'organised' adult education was first introduced in Lesotho in 1960 (Setsabi: 1987) with the founding of the University extension department at the then Pius XII University College, which was to become the University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland in 1964. It was because of the tri-national character of the University that the pattern of development of the University – provided adult education was more or less the same in the three BLS countries. The initial efforts were greatly influenced by the Antigonish philosophy, principles and practice. Thus, the departments' thrust and emphasis of operations were on credit union education, which it developed jointly with the then Government's department of co-operatives. However, during the past thirty years or so, the University has seen the evolution of credit part-time studies programmes – initially at post-graduate, diploma and certificate levels in teacher education, and later in business and adult education at certificate and diploma levels. Although these programmes were first run from the relevant faculties of education and social sciences respectively, in 1976, the IEMS assumed more responsibility, particularly in respect of administrative facilitation. This gave the Institute the most valuable experience in dealing with credit programmes.

Groundwork which was augmented by the consultancy efforts, sponsored by the USAID, to start a credit adult education programme, began in late 1982. Among the activities that were to be undertaken were the conducting of needs assessment for training in adult education as seen by the various Government Ministries; determination of appropriate levels for such training and determination of what adult education programmes already existed in the country. It was determined that no Institution was offering such training. In addition, the assessment study undertaken by IEMS suggested that the adult education agencies had actually requested IEMS to start a training programme, below the Bachelor's degree level, for employees whose major tasks at the work place involved designing and developing education programmes for adults. In other words, the initial target clientele included planners, facilitators and teachers in adult education activities. The major argument was that, although these people were otherwise professionally

qualified in their respective areas of specialisation, they somehow lacked and needed to be equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes, so vital in dealing with adult learners. Hence, the need for professional training in adult education for those professional groups and individuals engaged in various forms of adult education.

The programmes actually took off in the 1984–85 academic year with 18 students. The IEMS had only been mandated by senate to facilitate administratively for the offering of the programme, while the Faculty of Education had to assume responsibility for the academic aspects of the programme. In other words, it had to decide on admissions, appointment of teachers, registration, content provision, examinations, presentation of results and candidates for the award of certificates. So, in essence, the programme content had to follow the one offered for diploma education. This had to happen while the Institute and the consultants were working on the more relevant adult education courses that would have brought the necessary balance into the existing diploma programme.

PARTICIPATION LEVELS AND CLIENTELE CATEGORIES IN THE CREDIT ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

As already indicated in this paper, the credit adult education programmes draw participants from a very wide spectrum including agriculture, health, education, commerce, rural and community development, co-operatives and law. Some participants are members of the women's groups while others are employed by parastatal and private agencies. It is significant to note that the gender distribution is heavily in favour of women. For instance, during the 1991/92 academic year the ratio was 6:1 in the certificate programme, and 3:1 in the diploma programmes. (1991–92 Part-time Studies Annual Report). Most of the clients of the programme already hold certificates in agriculture, nursing, nutrition, social work and social development. In other words, these are otherwise 'technically qualified field workers'.

Table A. ADULT EDUCATION 1991–92 ENROLMENTS

PROGRAMME	GENDER DISTRIBUTION FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
CERTIFICATE I	23	3	26
CERTIFICATE II	22	5	27
DIPLOMA I	50	10	60
DIPLOMA II	9	8	37
TOTAL	104	36	140

The above table shows that there are more female participants enrolling in these programmes than males. This could be attributed to the fact that there are more women engaged in 'professional extension work than males'. (Ntimo-Makara and Morolong, 1989).

The next table shows categories of clients that were admitted into the diploma in adult education programme when it started in 1984–85.

TABLE B: THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME APPLICANTS

CANDIDATE #	CERTIFICATE	EXPERIENCE
1	Certificate in Rural Domestic Economy 3rd Class	Nutritionist 5 years
2	Elementary Book-keeping and Accounts (Merit)	Business Extension Officer 5 years
3	Mount Carmel International & Red Cross Certificate	Senior Health Assistant 13 years
4	General Certificate in Agric. (Credit)	Extension Assistant Agric. 3 years
5	L.P.T.C & G. C. E.	8 years as co-ordinator of women's affairs.
6	None provided P.H.T.C. (II) Plus Diploma in Agric.	11 years as Youth Organizer.
7	P.T.C. 3rd Class J.C., G.C.E. Institute of C.B. Exams	3 years as salesman
8	Diploma in modern mgt - credit Diploma in Practical Book-keeping and Accounts – Distinction	7 years co-operative Education
9	Certificate in Midwifery, Bantu Junior cert.(II)	4 years Team Leader Health E.P.I.
10	Certificate in Agric.(II) J.C.(II)	9 years Agricultural Extension Agent
11	Health Assistant Certificate in Comm. for Population and Social Development	7 years Health Assistant
12	J.C.(III) G.C.E.	16 years mentioned Prison Officer
13	J.C.(III) Public Health Certificate	Health Assistant 7 years

The content of the programmes and the general performance in examinations continues to be satisfactory so that the standard compares favourably with that in the sister institutions in the region. *(The Pro-vice Chancellor's C onsolidatel External Examiners' reports 1992: p.10).* The pass rate over the past seven years has been well over 90%. Wastage through failure and dropping out for various reasons has been significantly low. In an effort to strengthen the credit programmes at NUL, the University Council, in response to the External Examiners' suggestion, has given a directive to set up the Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Committee to 'review academic programmes, courses, textbooks and other teaching materials on a biennial basis' (*PVC's Report*, 1992: p.ii). It is hoped that all credit programmes, including of the adult education programmes, will be greatly enhanced and revamped.

The ever-increasing participation of qualified primary and secondary school teachers in the adult education programme is quite an interesting development. The full-time Faculty of Education BA Ed/BEd programmes have, for the past ten years, kept alive one semester credit course in adult/non-formal education offered as an option to teacher trainees. Between 1987 and now, enrolment in this course has increased from seven students to almost 60 students during the 1992–93 academic year. This development could well be interpreted as suggestive of the fact that teachers are beginning to appreciate the relevance and significance of adult education techniques in the practical realities of the practice of their profession within the Lesotho context. Until a year ago, almost 100% of the participants in the BEd secondary (teaching) programme have been mature, experienced teachers who qualified as teachers at the NTTC. As part of their professional preparation at the college, they have had to be in a year's internship and later teach for a minimum of two years before they can be admitted for further studies at the University. These are the experienced teachers who have already brushed shoulders with parents, politicians, chiefs, community development committees, religious leaders and the general adult community outside their school. One is, therefore, rightly inclined to assume that for these student teachers, knowledge of adult education content and techniques is relevant in the light of the challenges that face them everyday, as they operate within the context of the practical realities of their environment.

The Faculty of Education also offers a Diploma in Science Education (Agriculture). Students who enrol in this programme must have successfully completed the basic Agricultural Diploma course at the Lesotho Agricultural College (LAC). They then do a one-year education programme at the University. This programme specifically requested the course 'school and community'. The content of this course includes:

- School in relation to community needs;
- Community development;
- The role of the school and other education agents; and
- The status and role of the teacher in the community.

This teacher education programme obviously recognises the role of a teacher as an adult educator and a community animator. Without belabouring the issue of the role of 'a teacher' as an adult educator, one can cite other examples of nationally significant occasions, when teachers have been called upon to service the communities, other than by teaching in class. In general elections that have been held in Lesotho, just over two weeks ago, school teachers served as electoral and returning officers. This called for skills other than those used in classroom teaching.

The basic adult literacy agencies, such as The Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (INTERNSHIP), The Basic Non-Formal Education Systems (BANFES), whose operational activities were taken over two years ago by INTERNSHIP, and the Christian Council of Lesotho, all use school teachers as basic literacy instructors. For instance, when INTERNSHIP's idea of the village-based learning post programme was first introduced in 1980, it was specifically intended to involve school inspectors, teachers and the use of school buildings. Inspectors were to motivate/mobilize teacher's participation in the programme. The teachers would, in turn, help conscientize and mobilize the communities. The BANFES Community Learning System (CLS) was planned along the same lines.

The Lesotho Ministry of Education has adopted the policy of Education with Production for secondary education in Lesotho. Some secondary and high schools have successfully taken this idea on board, but the majority of schools have not yet started practising the principle. One of the major problems cited as frustrating the implementation efforts is that the undertaking is too involved as it calls for some 'andragogical skills' which most teachers do not have. It is true that the teacher's confidence depends on being knowledgeable, as she sees herself as an innovator and change agent.

It is further argued that these skills could have been acquired through formal exposure to the area of adult education. It was, again, suggested by the student teachers themselves during the 'focus interview sessions' that these 'andragogical skills' training components should be built into the regular teacher preparation programmes at the colleges. This proposition is also made in order to address the problems of recognition of qualifications currently faced by the majority of adult education graduates at NUL.

The teaching service does not recognise acquisition of such qualifications for teachers because they are deemed 'irrelevant' for teaching. This position is taken in spite of all the adult education-oriented activities that teachers engage in in their respective communities. The need to have the teaching personnel that will not only service 'the formal school system' is very strong in Lesotho, and indeed one dares to say so even of our sister countries in the southern African region. In order to counter the problem of non-recognition, it is submitted that perhaps an alternative would be to undertake a systematic review of our teacher education programmes, so that they are injected with the relevant adult education content that will enable a teacher to confidently serve in the role as a community educator. This vital adult education content could include:

- The philosophical and theoretical foundations of adult education;
- The psychology of adult learning;
- Adult teaching methods and techniques;
- Adult education and development;
- Principles and practice of guidance and counselling in adult education; and
- Adult education programme design, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Some of these components have to be compulsory while others could be strongly recommended options. The choice here would be greatly influenced by the amount of pedagogic content that programmes have to carry. This is to ensure a healthy balance between the two areas.

The above proposal to adopt an integrative approach will ensure that the prescribed subject knowledge and pedagogical competence that characterize teacher education programmes are

concurrently accorded recognition with the 'andragogical knowledge and skills' through the certificate awarded. This certificate will ensure that attendant remuneration is given for both areas of competence. The proposed pattern of training could also be adapted to training and professorial preparation of other categories of extension workers such as public health nurses, agricultural officers, nutritionists, and social workers.

CONCLUSION

To conclude this presentation, one wishes to capture the major arguments which have been made. First, the fact that Universities in this region have a very important role to play in offering credit part-time study programmes leading to University qualifications for professional adult education practice cannot be over-emphasised. Indeed, even at the 1985 conference of Credit Programmes in Adult Education in SADCC countries, the Universities in the region acknowledged and committed themselves to the fact that they see adult education programmes as one of the key and priority services that they should provide to the community for national development. In addition, these Universities are already offering similar credit programmes in adult education. To this end, the sentiment expressed by Ndebele, et. al. (1988: 45) in articulation of the statement of philosophy of NUL is most appropriate. They strongly argue for fostering link arrangements and effecting academic contact with all relevant professional and institutional associations of the African continent and beyond. There is no doubt that this can go a long way towards improving the quality of the credit programmes in adult education provided by our institutions. Secondly, this paper has attempted to make a case for the adoption of an integrative approach in professional training for adult education practice. The proposal is that relevant adult education components should be built into the content of existing professional training programmes, such as those for teachers, nurses, agricultural officers and nutritionists. This move would serve a double purpose in that it would ensure sound training of individuals whose day-to-day professional work involves dealing with the adult population. It would also help address the problem of 'non-recognition' faced by the majority of participants in the credit adult education programmes in Lesotho on completion of the courses. However, it has to be mentioned that efforts to take on some of the above suggestions are bound to encounter a number of problems.

For instance, by 1986, the report on the IEMS-conducted evaluation study on the NUL adult education credit programmes was already mentioning clients 'who do not qualify to enter into the diploma in adult education but badly need to be trained as professional adult educators'. In other words, there was an evident lack of adequately qualified clientele for admission to the programmes. The University senate is on record as having 'approved the proposed programme with the proviso that, in the future, should the identified target audience be fully trained, the programme will be revised for discontinuance'. (Nyiranda, 1987: 2). This position calls for more evaluative studies to be undertaken, to facilitate appropriate monitoring mechanisms for the programmes so that they always remain the high-quality programmes our Universities can be proud of.

On the question of adopting an 'integrative approach' to training for professional adult education practice, the immediate implication could be that programmes would take longer to complete. This would obviously impact on finances and other related matters. Even so, this could be

an innovative effort that could pay off in the future. Commenting on the need for strong policy framework, Saint (1992:129) writes: 'A set of key policy parameters is needed to guide the development of higher education. These should address critical issues such as growth, access, financing, graduate output, governance and accreditation'.

This poses a very serious challenge to all our institutions in the sub-region. It is, perhaps, only through co-operative and collaborative effort on all fronts that our universities can successfully live up to this challenge.

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ACCREDITATION OF ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

We are aware of the trends such as those reflected in our demographic situations. Strong forces for change at work in our societies have created new patterns of development within institutions of higher education. Basically, the structuring of education is being guided today by the changing nature of the world of work, presently advocated by the nations of the world. Professionalism, work-oriented education and, to a certain extent, increasing leisure time are prime factors in the new demands being placed on educational institutions. In seeking to respond to a multitude of community service needs, these institutions are struggling for guidance, to enable them to meet these demands through a reasonable and respectable new academia – a legitimate community service function that will be acceptable to the established academic community, yet flexible and effective in responding to community needs.

We are aware that member institutions of higher learning have long been cognizant of the need for and the importance of providing adult and continuing education programmes in their different areas. Although such programmes have been established under different administrative and organizational arrangements, insufficient resources and lack of a definite set of standards to guide them in their formulation, have inhibited educational institutions in their attempts to develop adult education programmes that are viable and relevant.

The increasing importance of offering adult and continuing education programmes in higher education, the need to strengthen and redirect the programme component, and the lack of adequate standards to guide institutions of higher education, constitute the basis of this paper.

The paper further calls for attention to be given to the status of adult and continuing education in southern African Universities. It is suggested that findings from this examination be utilized along with input from both local and external experts in the field, to formulate criteria for use in the developing and strengthening of both current and future adult and continuing education programmes, in institutions of higher education.

RATIONALE FOR ACCREDITATION

The many facets of contemporary societies contribute significantly to the social setting confronting higher education institutions. The problems of poverty, generated gap, crime, the economies of our countries, migration from rural to urban areas, labour migration to the

Republic of South Africa and the homelands, women's responsibilities in the presence and/or absence of men for economic reasons, which contribute to changing family structures, to name a few examples, are critical issues which press for solution. Other issues, such as drug addiction of youth to a certain extent, alcoholism, family disorganization, changing social values, the domination of media by political advocates and the role of individuals in our modern societies also demand attention.

The demographic characteristics of southern African societies represent the challenges and demands which are now placed before institutions of higher education. Societies are looking to education for with solutions to the problems which plague individual effectiveness and national stability.

Educators are beginning to recognize that future success of the universities lies within the fact that higher education is being examined at all levels. However, higher education must not attempt to be all things to all people. Higher education cannot be expected to solve all the problems for all the societies.

Since traditional patterns of higher education are clearly inadequate to meet current and future needs and opportunities of societies, educators and ordinary people are seeking a flexible system of higher education that will fulfil the needs of both the individual and the society. To this end, higher education's role of offering adult and continuing education programmes is a vital one.

THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF ACCREDITATION

The purpose of accreditation as described by Seldon in 1960 (Commission of Colleges, 1973) in the American context, is to solve the problems of admissions and maintenance of minimum academic standards, and the functions of accreditation have been identified by Blanch in 1959 (Commission of Colleges, 1973) as follows:

- To encourage institutions to improve their programmes by providing standards on criteria established by competent bodies;
- To translate the standards of education for the practice of a profession;
- To inform those who employ graduates of an institution or who examine its graduates for admissions; and
- To raise the standard of education for the practice of a profession.

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITIES

Historically, the three main functions of higher education are research, teaching and community service. Much emphasis has been placed on the first two functions, but the community service function is the key to current social crises within our societies. This was supported by Dr. A.M. Maruping, in delivering a keynote address at the International Workshop on Research Methods in Educatio,. Humanities and Social Sciences at the National University of Lesotho in 1983.

'Although written in different words, there are essentially three standard roles which Universities are expected to play in their societies. They are:

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(a) The transmission of existing knowledge through teaching, often with the view to meeting manpower requirements;
(b) Expanding the frontiers of knowledge through research; and
(c) Serving society and community through extension services.'

He cited Yakubu Gowna, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in his address at the third General Conference of the Association of African Universities.

> '... a university in Africa is not only a centre of learning, a centre of research, a store-house of knowledge, and a community of scholars; it has to be in addition, a main agent for the improvement of the economic, cultural and social conditions of our peoples ...'

We are also aware of the criticism surrounding our universities that emanates from their lack of emphasis on the community service function which is directed toward the concepts of 'relevance' and 'flexibility'. Our own governments and people from all walks of life, particularly in developing countries, are growing increasingly impatient with the universities slowness to change and their reluctance to participate actively, if not aggressively, in finding solutions to societal problems.

Our universities, if they expect to survive in contemporary society, must place equal importance on the community service function and traditional education. The community service function must not be isolated from the regular academic programmes. Adult and continuing education should become an integral and increasingly important part of the whole education process. Thus, the university becomes a 'total university' with a new look at its place and role in society. The community service function of higher education can be the vehicle through which it can test new ideas and innovative projects, which can implement a changing curriculum within the institution, and offer problem-solving exercises to the community.

The introduction of new programmes into the university curriculum usually elicits strong resistance from the traditional higher education establishment. This is not unique as far as universities in developing countries are concerned. Historically, American higher education and many other developed countries have resisted innovative and non-traditional study programmes. We are informed that, with the American evolution of regional voluntary accrediting agencies over the past 90 years, institutions of higher education have come to look to the accrediting agencies as legitimizers for new and different programmes which may develop. As such, regional accrediting has been one of the most influential forces in the development of higher education.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF ACCREDITATION AND ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

It is important to examine the relationship between the adult and continuing education programmes, and accreditation as it is perceived in the American context. According to the commission of Colleges report of 1973, adult and continuing education at the higher education level are most often the vehicles for the public service efforts of the institutions and have been slow to move into a public service function, which is generally non-traditionally structured. A positive move on the part of the higher education institutions to recognise the public service func-

tion as part of the academic community has greatly accelerated the development of adult and continuing education as a primary function of traditional situations.

Another factor in the relationship is the general understanding of full educational opportunity for all nations. This is also supported by Gould (1971) in that educational opportunity must be provided to everyone, regardless of age, previous formal education, or circumstances in life, the amount and type of education that will be of benefit in adding to his potential as a person.

As institutions of higher education seek to cope with changing societal needs and changing opportunities within the society, by creating educational patterns to meet these needs, they must have help in breaking their traditional bonds. They must find ways to respond to the public need for nontraditional educational programmes that are relevant and yet academically secure. It is believed that such a role can best be assumed by voluntary accreditation associations, and by so doing, the association can attain a new level of relevancy.

It is with the above understanding that the author prepared a provocative paper on the accreditation of adult and continuing education programmes in institutions of higher education within the southern African context. From the information provided about adult and continuing education programmes offered by southern African Universities, it is important to realise the disparity in admissions criteria and assessment regulations in dealing with the same programmes, thus making it difficult for graduates from individual universities to smoothly transfer to any university adult and continuing education programme and to be employable by any organisation within the region.

ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY SOUTHERN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

It is encouraging to notice the efforts of the universities in southern Africa in extending the resources to individuals and groups who are not a part of the regular academic community, and bringing an academic institution's special competence to bear on the solution of society's problems through adult and continuing education programmes. This has also contributed to the maintenance of institutional integrity and confidence. The universities in Southern Africa also play a major role in the accreditation of adult and continuing education programmes in the following universities;

UNIVERSITY OF DAR-ES-SALAAM, TANZANIA

The adult education programmes at the University of Dar-es-Salaam started as a unit within the Department of Education back in the eary 1970s, with one course called Adult Education.

In the 1980s, the adult education unit expanded its academics into a major subject within the Department of Education comprising of six units. In 1989, the Faculty of Education was established, and the Department of Adult Education and Extension Services was one of five department born.

The students who major in adult education are admitted according to the University of Dar-es-Salaam regulations. Those include two principal subjects with one or two subsidiaries at the A level or its equivalent. Such students are selected into the Faculty of Education to undertake either BA (Education) or BEd or BSc (Education).

All students admitted into the first year of education take general education courses. Towards the end of the first year, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the faculty divides students into their major areas of specialization. These areas of academic specialization include adult education majors, secondary and teacher education. They go for teaching practice for eight weeks in the stated areas.

Those students who select to join the adult education major take adult education methods and adult psychology courses in their second year of study . They also take other courses from other departments to complete the six units required. At the end of the year, the students go into adult education institutions and or centres for teaching practice for eight weeks. They are assessed by university lecturers.

In the third year, courses include literacy and national development, workers education, planning, administration and management of adult education, and history and philosophy. Six other units are taken from departments of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. In future, when the programme becomes a four-year course, adult education majors will also undertake teaching practice in the third year. The fourth year will basically be specialization courses and final examinations for the BEd degree in adult education.

Assessment of adult education majors is of two types. One is by continuous assessment (40 marks) and, secondly, final examination (60 marks). On completion, a letter grade is given. In the final analysis, the degree awarded (BEd) is granted on the basis of a GPA (Grade Point Average). A first class degree for 4.5 and above, upper second, 3.8 to 4.4, lower second, 3.0 to 3.7, and a pass degree, 2.7 to 3.0.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

The Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Zambia was officially established in 1975. The creation of the Centre brought together the former Departments of Correspondence Studies, Extra-Mural Studies and the Institute of Education. This fusion resulted in three Departments under the Centre: a Department of correspondence studies, a Department of Mass Communication, and a Department of Adult Education.

A Board of Studies was formed to regulate the academic and professional activities of the Centre. This Board met for the first time on 11 July, 1975. Later, in the same year, departmental Profession Committees were established to advice the Centre's Board of Studies on Adult Education, Teacher Education, Correspondence Studies, Mass Communication and Extension Studies, and on how the University should respond to needs in these areas. The Extension and Conferences Unit was created in 1977, to take charge of extra-mural class programmes, seminars, workshops, public lectures and conferences. The Unit because a full department in 1983.

The Centre has two main functions:

1. To teach and research in the field of adult education and other related fields in which it is competent to teach; and
2. To participate directly in the national adult education programmes. The Centre carries out these functions through its programmes in each of the four departments, mentioned above.

According to the assessment and examinations regulation of the University of Zambia, emphasis is placed on continuous assessment. Continuous assessment is weighted at two-thirds of the final grade in every course, while the final examination results comprise the remaining one third.

The Centre provides opportunities for seminars where staff, students and practitioners discuss current issues in the field of adult education. In addition, the Centre organises various training programmes.

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

The University of Zimbabwe has been instrumental in offering credit courses, at varying levels, in adult education since 1961. The purpose of this section is to give an understanding of the Department of Adult Education responsible for the credit programmes, and insight into the various courses.

The Department is located in the Faculty of Education. The main function of this Department is the preparation for Adult Education, through credit programmes, of rural and urban development as the needs of the changing Zimbabwe society demand. As a result of this role, the Department is in the forefront of Adult Education, which entails other functions such as general research and innovation in the field.

The general orientation was affected by political, social and economic situations. The current credit programme includes the following: Diploma in Adult Education, Diploma in Health Education, Diploma in Nursing Education, Bachelor's degree in Adult Education and Masters in Adult Education.

All courses are structured to cater for part-time and full-time students. All part-time students are required to attend teaching sessions, normally covering eight weeks, during the period of their respective courses. The intensive period is reinforced by distance education methods. Students are expected to do a number of assignments, thus encouraging self-directed learning among course participants.

The Department operates a system whereby students evaluate courses and lecturers accordingly. The purpose of this is to assess whether or not courses, as designed and delivered, are achieving the objectives of the institution and the students.

UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

The University of Botswana first offered a Diploma in Adult Education in 1979, with the approval of the Ministry of Education and the Directorate of Personnel. The course is intended for men and women who already have some work experience with an adult education component. It is a professional training course for people who will be able to use and apply what they have learned as soon as they return to their jobs. The programme takes place over two full academic years. It includes a field project, lasting approximately ten weeks, which takes place during the long vacation period after the first year. The course ends with the final examination after the second year, in May. The course is offered under the auspices of the Faculty of Education.

The University of Botswana also offers a two-year programme at certificate level in adult education. The programme started in 1983, as a pilot project on distant teaching modes. The

programme admits candidates with a junior certificate, obtained after three years of secondary school education. The programme is run by the University Centre of Continuing Education, and the Faculty of Education is responsible for awarding certificates.

The Centre also runs the Certificate and Diploma in Accounting and Business Studies, in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences, which is responsible for academic matters and awarding credentials.

UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO

The University of Lesotho launched a Diploma course in Adult Education in 1984, after many requests from adult education agencies in the country for the institutions to mount a programme in adult education at less than a baccalaureate degree. The programme attracts clientele who are already employed as extension educators in the different ministries of the government, non-organisational agencies and parastatal organisations. Following further requests by both the government and non-governmental organisations, the University started a Certificate course in Adult Education. The certificate course takes place over two years and admits candidates with a junior certificate, just like the University of Botswana.

The University also offers other sub-degree programmes, such as a Certificate in Statistics, a Certificate in Business Studies and a Diploma in Business Studies, to cater for those people who are already working and did not have an opportunity to continue with their studies to first degree level due to problems and commitments. The University offers these programmes under the close academic supervision of its relevant faculties. The programmes are offered for a maximum duration of two years on part-time basis.

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

The University of Swaziland operates in the same way as the Universities of Botswana and Lesotho in offering both adult education and business studies programmes at certificate and diploma level. The programmes are accredited under the relevant faculties and administered by the Division of Extra-Mural Services which is an extension arm of the University.

It is important to know that the three Universities once agreed on the joint development of core study material which could be used within the southern African region. The three institutions comprised representatives from extension units, and any other interested institutions, met to discuss the curriculum in adult and continuing education programmes. It was believed that the idea would expedite the issues of collaboration and co-operation among the three institutions. The three institutions are members of the Distance Education Association for Southern Africa (DEASA) where they collaborate in sharing expertise, course materials, information etc.

The paper will not cover all the Universities within the southern African region due to the lack of updated information concerning the correct status of adult and continuing education programmes in these institutions. The information may be made available through a suggested study to examine the actual status of accreditation of the programmes within the regional institutions of higher education.

PROBLEMS FACING ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN SOUTHERN AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Perhaps the greatest problem facing adult and continuing education is a philosophical one, with two basic parts: first, the recognition of the societal need as a responsibility of higher education and, second, the gaining of full acceptance by the academic community for external studies and non-formal education programmes.

Evidence suggests that the areas of social need are, in part, a product of higher education. The traditional academic community, though cautious, appears to be willing to open the doors to innovative, non-traditional areas of study. We believe that our African Universities, in the role of legitimizers, can greatly accelerate acceptance by giving credence and full support to adult and continuing education programmes.

In conclusion, we may ask ourselves the following questions with regard to what we are already doing to strengthen adult and continuing education as institutions of higher education and in dealing with the question of full recognition and accreditation in southern Africa:

- Have our universities fully accepted the challenge of community service responsibility by comprehensively offering adult and continuing education programmes?
- Have they incorporated the necessary administrative units into their administrative organization with appropriate resource allocation?
- Have they given to adult and continuing education programmes appropriate status, equal to other components of the institution, to ensure and safeguard the quality of the programmes?
- Do they consult with informal and formal institutions/organisations for the purpose of meeting the demands of our contemporary society and situations?

We may want to look at the above in a more comprehensive manner by conducting research on how adult and continuing education programmes in southern African Universities can be co-ordinated and standardised to meet the requirements of proper accreditation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper tries to highlight the importance of offering adult and continuing education programmes in institutions of higher education. The paper further highlights the rationale, purpose and functions for accreditation within the American context. The author revisits the role of the universities as perceived in the African context. For the purpose of the theme of the conference, the paper highlights adult and continuing education programmes offered by the institutions of higher education in the southern African region. Last, but not least, the author shows that there are problems facing the accreditation of adult and continuing education in southern Africa and world wide. The paper finally recommends further research into a co-ordinated and standardized system of accreditation which is flexible enough to operate in the southern African context.

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FACILITATING ACCESS TO THE PENINSULA TECHNIKON FOR ADULTS WITH INCOMPLETE/ INADEQUATE SECONDARY EDUCATION.

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THE TECHNIKON ENTRY 'GATE'.

Access to technikon education is tightly controlled by legislation which stipulates the minimum entry requirements as:

- A Standard Ten (Senior) Certificate or a recognised equivalent qualification; or
- A mature age exemption for applicants who are 23 years of age or older on 1 January in the year they wish to enrol. In addition, mature age exemption candidates must have had three years' appropriate work experience, or have demonstrated proficiency in the relevant course. Further, the academic board of the technikon must be convinced that their communication ability and/or their work experience will enable them to study successfully at the technikon.

In addition to these minimum requirements, the various schools of the technikons set their own requirements, such as compulsory school subjects, portfolios, selection tests and interviews. At the Peninsula Technikon, these are set out in a special publication entitled; *General Admission equirements for 1993*.

These general admission requirements set up a formidable 'gate' for students wishing to enrol at technikons. As the demand for tertiary education increases at an alarming rate, eligible students, and some who may be potentially suitable, are being refused as most selection criteria favour candidates with senior certificates with high symbols in particular subjects. Limited resources determine class size and thus a *de facto* escalation in entry requirements occurs in the face of the huge demand for places.

When one adds to this scenario the needs of a large adult population with inadequate secondary education, let alone those with incomplete secondary education who wish to enter tertiary education institutions, one realises more vividly the problems of access.

The traditional route for adults with incomplete secondary education is to complete the senior certificate either through night school or by correspondence course.

This can take three years, with students doing two subjects per year. Students are subjected to the same curriculum designed for young adults at secondary schools. This route requires an incredible amount of dedication on the part of the adult learner in suspending their need for relevance and expending much valuable time just to reach the 'starting gate', without any guarantee of going through it.

In the absence of a national 'second chance' education system for adults with incomplete/ inadequate secondary education, most would be effectively kept out of tertiary education. Similarly, the problem is reflected at other levels for adults with incomplete primary education who wish to further their studies through vocational education at technical colleges, for example, where the entrance qualification is normally Standard 7, with the required subjects.

The question that we asked was: How can the 'gate' and 'gate-keepers' be challenged so that access for these adult students can be effected in ways that will meaningfully empower them?

CHALLENGING THE 'GATE'.

The conference on Tertiary Admission Criteria at the Peninsula Technikon, in March 1990, raised a number of relevant issues surrounding the use of the senior certificate results as admission criteria for tertiary education. Its efficacy was clearly questioned in the context of young adults, but not much was said about adults with work and other learning histories.

From July 1990, the Peninsula Technikon participated in the Education and Training Task-Force of the Western Cape Region Committee of the National Co-ordinating Committee for Repatriation (NCCR). It became apparent that large numbers of exiles with incomplete/inadequate secondary education would be returning to South Africa with very few viable options for further studies. The second language issue proved a major obstacle to many people who would have been prepared to go back to secondary school in the absence of alternatives to overcome these problems. The Peninsula Technikon proposed the Access Programme.

Salient features of this programme:

1. The mature age exemption was exploited to the full with the successful completion of the Access Course regarded as fulfilment of criteria other than age. This has been approved by the Academic Board of the Peninsula Technikon. An obvious drawback of using the mature age exemption is that adults who would not meet the 23 years age criterion, by 1 January in the year in which they wished to commence formal studies, are excluded.
2. The duration of the programme (six months) meant that we had to limit our intake to students who would benefit most in this short period. Selection is based on an interview as well as a language and mathematics questionnaire. All applicants who present themselves are interviewed.
3. The programme is designed around six main emphases:
   - English communications;
   - Cognitive skills;
   - Building confidence and self-esteem;
   - Study discipline;
   - Study as a site of struggle; and
   - Subject-specific work, i.e. mathematics and a career-related subject.
4. Technikon Schools are fully integrated into the process and take responsibility for teaching the career-related subject. The Mathematics and Languages Departments take responsibility for their subject courses. Students are integrated into the life of the Technikon as fully as possible.

5. The programme is regulated for each student by a learning contract, which guarantees automatic access under certain conditions (a copy is attached).
6. Full use of adult education methodology is encouraged.
7. Competent and caring teaching staff are central to the success of this programme.

INITIAL RESULTS

The table below gives the situation for the 1992 first intake.

REPATRIATION ACCESS PROGRAMME 1992 FIRST INTAKE-SUMMARY OF RESULTS

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PASSES		FAIL
		AUTOMATIC ACCESS	ELIGIBLE FOR ACCESS	
ABC	12	–	5	7
BUSINESS	50	16	17	17
ENGINEERING	28	9	10	9
SCIENCE	19	10	4	5
TOTALS	109	35	36	38
%	100%	32%	33%	35%

% Pass : 65%

A total of 67 people were registered in formal programmes at Peninsula Technikon at the beginning of 1993.

SOME INTERESTING STATISTICS

- 62 students did not have a Standard 10 Certificate or its equivalent.
- 36 out of 62 students successfully completed the course and gained entry to the formal programme.
- 9 out of the 109 students were female.
- 7 of the female students succeeded and gained entry to the formal programme.

CHALLENGING THE 'GATE-KEEPERS'

The students who gained automatic access were seen to be in a better position than students who came from traditional sources. Some schools felt unhappy about their intake being, as it were, 'pre-booked'. The essential point that was stressed from the inception of the Access Programme was that one could not have additional access without increasing the capacity of the institution

to deal with the numbers, i.e. an expansion programme. Increasing the intake is always a challenge the 'gate-keepers' will have to face.

The second challenge that gate-keepers face is the transforming role that the Access Programme has had on the formal system. As the post-Access students are being tracked through the formal system, interesting changes and observations are being made. This tracking is being done by the Academic Development Team at the Peninsula Technikon, and we await their first reports with great eagerness. The real success of our students will be measured by their performance in their first year in the formal system.

Increasingly, the gate-keepers have to review their practices. Prior learning assessments must be recognised, better interviewing skills honed, and relevant communication and mathematical or other competencies must be evaluated appropriately, so that adult learners may be given the best possible opportunity to achieve their potential.

It is certainly our hope that other gate-keepers in our society have taken note of our pilot project and may be tempted to allow similar pilots, which may then form a national programme.

AN INTERESTING OBSERVATION*

A question which I have been asking constantly about the Access Programme is: 'What are we doing?' The more I think and ask questions, the more convinced I am that this programme is about apprenticing the adult learners to a 'technikon discourse'. Our teaching style is about acquiring ways of being, thinking, acting, talking, writing, reading, valuing and believing in the technikon context. There is also the attempt to teach for learning and develop 'meta-knowledge' about what is learned. Just what this 'technikon discourse' is and how we are teaching for acquisition and learning, will be the subjects of future research.

* I am indebted to James Gee (1990) *Social Linguistics and Literacies*, for his paradigm about teaching for acquisition, teaching for learning and his definition of discourse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We are grateful to the Danish government who has generously funded this project via Interfund, the African National Congress, and Cheryl Pearce, the Access Course Co-ordinator, and her staff for the sterling work they do. The directors and staff of the various schools of the Peninsula Technikon are very supportive of this pilot project and we wish to place on record our appreciation of their endeavours.

APPENDIX

LEARNING CONTRACT

REPATRIATION PROGRAMME
Access Course to formal education at Peninsula Technikon

The ACCESS COURSE is designed to empower repatriates and a number of South African students, who are members of severely disadvantaged communities (such as the rural poor and squatter settlements). The ACCESS COURSE has been introduced by the Peninsula Technikon and is designed to not only allow entrance but also give successful students a fair chance of success in formal studies.

AIM

The aim of this bridging course is:

- To help students acquire the skills and knowledge they need for effective participation in the world of work.
- To provide a broad educational foundation which will equip students for formal study within the various schools of the Technikon.
- To provide a learning environment which assists students to integrate themselves into the broader student community.

This contract establishes the rights and duties of both staff and students participating on the ACCESS COURSE which begins in January 1993. The Access Course is the first bridging programme for Returnees. Students and staff participating on the ACCESS COURSE are bound by their commitment to fulfil the conditions of the contract Each party to the contract has the right to re-assess the course to meet the formal entry requirements of each school participating in the programme.

To ensure a fair chance of success, the various participants in the ACCESS COURSE have certain obligations and responsibilities. In order to achieve these aims:

(A) LECTURERS UNDERTAKE TO

(i) Create a learning environment which engenders mutual respect and equality as human beings.
(ii) Be punctual for all classes, tutorials and laboratory sessions.
(iii) Facilitate learning for the full allocated time.
(iv) Help students academically or arrange for students to get the appropriate help.
(v) Check that students are working and remain motivated to succeed.
(vi) Give students private but frank feedback on their performance.
(vii) Inform the Director of the Centre for Continuing Education about any student who is not honouring his/her learning contract.
(viii) Provide creative ways of teaching and/or getting students to learn.
(ix) Assess teaching strategies and constantly try to improve on the method of interaction.

(B) THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (C.C.E.) UNDERTAKES TO:

(i) Test students' cognitive, mathematic and communication skills when entering the programme.

(ii) Provide each lecturer with as comprehensive a learning history of each student as possible.

(iii) Identify the high risk students and provide them with additional academic and personal support with regard to:
  (a) Individual counselling
  (b) Medical care

(iv) Create and environment and a support system that will enable lecturers to execute their tasks satisfactorily.

(v) Establish a monitoring system in terms of student absenteeism through such structures as:
  (a) An attendance register
  (b) An absentee follow-up form
  (c) A class and lecturer forum
  (d) Staff tea meetings (informal meeting between staff members)

(vi) Encourage students to become self-reliant.

(C) THE STUDENTS UNDERTAKE TO:

(i) Attend all classes required for the course.

(ii) Abide by the course and institutional rules.

(iii) Recognise and accept this as a second chance to gain a meaningful education and make the maximum use of the opportunity.

(iv) Do the necessary preparation/study/assignments as may be required by each lecturer by the date that it is required.

(v) Prepare for and participate in the various forms of evaluation as may be required by the lecturer.

(vi) Participate in academic support or counselling programmes when required to do so by the lecturer of the C.C.E. staff.

(vii) Request help from the staff when difficulty is being experienced that may hinder his/her academic progress.

(viii) Suggest improvements that can be brought about in the teaching/learning situation.

(ix) Inform the Director of the C.C.E. of any deviations from this contract by any person or persons.

(x) Take responsibility for his/her actions and accept the consequences thereof.

(D) CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION:

The criteria will address three categories of students:

(1) Those who will be given automatic admission to the formal Technikon programmes.

(2) Those who may apply for admission to the formal Technikon programmes and whose applications will be considered together with all the other applications received by the Technikon.

(3) Those who have not completed the Access Programme successfully.

(D.1) Automatic admission to the Technikon:
Students who obtain 60% or higher in each of the 4 subjects of the ACCESS COURSE will automatically be admitted to the appropriate formal Technikon programme for 1993.

(D.2) Eligibility to apply to the Technikon:
Students who obtain 50% or more in each of the 4 subjects may apply to the Technikon for admission. Their application will be processed in the normal manner with all other applications received.

(D.3) Unsuccessful candidates:
Students who obtain less than 50% in any of the 4 subjects must find employment, apply to a Technical College for admission, or apply for permission to repeat the ACCESS COURSE. Students will only be allowed to repeat an Access Course once.

We, the undersigned, hereby agree to adhere to the conditions and undertakings made in this Learning Contract.

Signed at ..... on .....
(PLACE) (DATE)

By ....
STUDENT NAME SIGNATURE

WITNESSES 1. ..... 2. .....

....
ON BEHALF OF LECTURERS S.B.A: ISAACS
DIRECTOR C.C.E.

WITNESSES 1. ..... 2. .....

CURRICULUM

THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA'S EXPERIENCES IN THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS AT A DISTANCE–LESSONS FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

As in other countries the demand for higher education is felt very strongly in Namibia. If the demand includes only full-time studies, it is severely limited, as the demand of adults, from all walks of life, for education beyond secondary level is very high. With this demand for further education in view, it is of vital importance to note that one cannot separate adult education from distance education as a mode of education.

ADULT DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS

This paper deals with the experiences of the Department of Distance Education at the University of Namibia (UNAM) with regard to the education of adults at a distance. This paper will not deal with all types of correspondence students in Namibia, – only those students who are enrolled at UNAM. Many (about 95%) of our students return to education after a gap of several years. In fact, the students in the teacher training courses are forced by the Ministry of Education and Culture to upgrade their qualifications. This come-back to education leads to a lack of confidence in the student's ability to learn and, as a result, they remain in constant fear of not doing well. In general, they have to develop concepts which demand new departures in thought. The majority of our students live in the rural areas, which means that they are geographically isolated and study on their own. Due to long distances they find it difficult to form study groups or attend weekend classes. Another obstacle of isolation is the problem of communication (no telephones, far away from a Post Office, etc.).

Presently, our students have the opportunity to attend two vacation schools during the course of the year, where they have face-to-face contact with their lecturers. The greater proportion of our students also have to cope with domestic issues and thus have problems in devoting all their attention to their studies.

EXPERIENCES IN REGARD TO STUDY MATERIAL

In reviewing the different definitions of distance education, it is clear that printed study material plays an important role in imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes (Keegan 1990: 36–38). The use of printed study material is one element which unites lecturer and student and carries educational

content. To communicate effectively with distant adult learners by means of printed study material it is important to make use of the best writers one can find. A person can have a long list of degrees behind him, but without writing skills he could not write for distant adult learners.

Most of the study material in the Department of Distance Education at UNAM consist of printed material. This material includes study guides and tutorial letters.

The Department of Distance Education makes use of full-time and part-time writers. Due to a small academic component the department is forced to employ writers from outside the institution (teachers, lawyers, police officers, economists, etc.). While a team approach is not being followed, yet, the work of the writer is evaluated by a moderator.

I also want to give a brief description of the responsibilities the full-time writers/lecturers encounter in order to emphasise the fact that an institution should not make use of overloaded personnel as writers. Our full-time lecturers are responsible for the following tasks:

- Marking students' assignments;
- Writing study material;
- Tutoring students by telephone;
- Setting and marking examination papers;
- Editing courses;
- Lecturing at vacation schools;
- Attending meetings and seminars; and
- Playing the role of editor and proof reader.

When preparing study material for students, the full-time lecturers are confronted with the following problems:

- The time to write study material is limited (nine months for a complete study guide);
- No experience in writing study material;
- They are not suitably trained in writing study material for distant adult learners, through no a fault of their own;
- No assistance from an editor and proofreader – this implies that they are working in isolation;
- They are overloaded with a variety of functions;
- Sometimes they have to write on very short notice at a very late stage of the year;
- Not much time to do research;
- Also responsible for community work;
- Lack of typing and literacy skills;
- Lack of necessary resources.

When looking at the abovementioned problem areas it is vital to address these matters in order to produce high quality study material.

It is also important to look at the position of part-time writers and the problems they encounter when preparing study material:

- Due to their own working situation, writing study material for the Department of Distance Education is not their first priority. They have to write during their spare time in the afternoon/evening/at the week-end;

- They also lack experience, training, the skill to write and computer literacy.
- The time to prepare study material is limited (nine months, and in some cases, less than nine months);
- For certain subjects there is only one expert in Namibia – the writers for these subjects are even more isolated;
- Most of the writers do not know the students they are writing for;
- Writers of educational courses face the problem of inconsistency in decision making by the Ministery of Education and Culture. Writers cannot finalise their preparation, with the result that they cannot keep to due dates for handing in study material;
- Due to their own working circumstances, they do not have the time to attend training sessions;
- Some writers are busy with their own studies, which also require extra attention, time and energy;
- They are not acquainted with the values, attitudes and skills relevant to the distance education.

One of the functions of the course organisers in the Department of Distance Education is to write study material. In the process they have to face the following problems:

- Recruitment of the best writers;
- Maintaining the interest of the writers;
- For some of the writers the task is done only for the sake of the money. This implies that the writing of the study material is not a priority;
- Many of the writers are not teachers/lecturers which implies that they are not acquainted with the didactic principles of teaching;
- Many writers see it as part of their community service and are not really interested;
- They limit their own writing time by starting late in the year;
- Remuneration is not market-related.

These problem areas offer only a small picture of what is experienced in the preparation of study material. It is clear that the preparation of study material should receive all the attention and support possible.

ADMINISTRATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

The administration of distance education is such a vast subject, that it is actually an article on its own. As in other institutions the administration in the Department of Distance Education at UNAM is concerned with different activities which are aimed at the provision of efficient means of learning to students. These activities can be classified into four groups:

- generic administrative and managerial;
- auxiliary;
- instrumental; and
- functional

In practise the above mentioned groups of activities are usually carried out simultaneously (Cloete 1992: 50,51).

The generic administrative functions in the Department of Distance Education are concerned with the following activities:

- Policy-making and analysis (e.g. identifying needs, preparation of courses, appointment of lecturers, etc.);
- Organising (e.g. organising vacation schools, meetings, workshops, etc.);
- Staffing (e.g. need assessment according to academic and administrative needs);
- Financing (e.g. budgeting);
- Determining work methods and procedures (e.g. preparing procedure manuals, productivity improvement systems/techniques; and
- Controlling (e.g. reporting to head of department and residential faculties, setting standards for services and products, etc.).

The performance of administrative functions depends on a number of auxiliary functions. These auxiliary functions are performed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of all the other administrative functions in the Department of Distance Education. The following auxiliary activities can be identified:

- Research;
- Questionnaires;
- Computers;
- Decentralised university centres;
- Data processing; and
- Publishing brochures and leaflets.

As mentioned earlier all the administrative functions are carried out simultaneously. If an institution desires to function effectively and efficiently, it is required to perform activities which are instrumental in the performance of its work (Cloete 1992: 229). In this regard the following instrumental functions in the Department of Distance Education can be identified (and can be divided into two groups):

- Personal (e.g. decision making, communication, conducting meetings and negotiating); and
- Impersonal (e.g. provision of offices, workshops, furniture, stationery, etc.)

If one looks at the aforementioned matters, it is clear that the administrative officers must perform a number of personal functions (speak, listen, read and write) to make them essential factors in the department. To enable these officers to perform, they are provided with the impersonal instrumental requirements necessary to provide a high standard of service to our students.

To perform the numerous functions involved in the provision of education, a range of appropriate functions have to be undertaken by professional and other employees. These functions are known as functional activities or line functions. In order to perform functional activities the Department of Distance Education is dealing with the following:

- The students are provided with study guides, workbooks, etc.;
- A first tutorial letter is sent out to students to introduce them to a particular course and to supply important dates, details of assignments, etc.;

- The students have to hand in assignments in order to obtain a year mark, to sit the examination;
- Follow-up tutorial letters are sent out to students with general comments on assignment answers, explanatory notes on aspects of subject matter, etc.;
- Students are invited to attend vacation schools conducted by lecturers. The primary purpose is to give students and staff the opportunity to meet and discuss academic and administrative problems;
- Students are offered the opportunity to contact or visit lecturers;
- The students are also free to make use of telephone tutoring; and
- At the beginning of each year the students are registered for the offered by the Department of Distance Education.

From this, it can be gathered that the main purpose of the Department of Distance Education is to provide education for students who cannot attend the full-time classes for various reasons.

It may appear that we do not experience problems with regard to administration. Time does not permit a detailed examination of all administrative problems, but I wish to highlight some of them. The most serious problems relating to administrative aspects are:

- Delays in dispatching study material and marked assignments to students, which impedes their progress;
- Sending the wrong material to students, thereby causing confusion and frustration;
- Printing study material is not a priority of the printing section of the university (we do not have our own printing equipment);
- The lack of space creates problems regarding offices for staff and the storage of study material;
- A too small administrative and academic staff to administer the Department 100% effectively;
- The lack of appropriately trained staff for adult distance education;
- The lack of interest and a negative attitude towards the Department from the residential faculties;
- The inefficient services rendered by the university centres;
- A lack of funds preventing the smooth administration of the Department;
- Problems of the postal system (students receive study material late, and in some cases not at all. At many places there are no post offices.)

Though I can go on for some time elaborating in detail, I believe I have said enough in the foregoing parts to give at least some insight into the activities of the Department of Distance Education at UNAM.

CONCLUSION

If any institution desires to contribute to the education of the adult, it is vital to take cost-effectiveness into account. In this sense it would be wise to take distance education into consideration. In this paper I have tried to point out some problems experienced by the Department of Distance Education at UNAM. I don't want to look into the advantages/disadvantages of distance education.

Any institution which is obliged to adult education, whether residential or at a distance, should attend to the following aspects in order to provide a high standard of education to adult students:

- Student counselling is of vital importance (e.g. to break down the lack of confidence);
- Establish a well organised student support system (e.g. university centres, communication, etc.);
- In the preparation of study material I would suggest the team approach (subject speciliast, moderator, artist, editor, educational technologist) for a variety of reasons;
- When recruiting writers, it is best to advertise the post and interview applicants;
- Make sure that the study material is personalized (have one student in mind – not the masses). The language must be friendly and simple;
- The writers of study material should be trained in the techniques of writing for adult/ distant learners;
- A clear job description for the writer should be available;
- Writers of study material should have enough time to complete their work (definately not less than a year);
- Provide a high standard of education and service to avoid the fallacy that distance/adult education is labelled as an inferior type of education;
- Enough funds should be available to render the desired services.

From the foregoing discussions it becomes clear that planning, with both short- and long-term goals, is essential, enough funds should be available, personnel should be selected carefully and be trained, the administration should acquire a vast store of knowledge and expertise, to be effective and professional, to the benefit of the student.

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TEXTS AND ADULT EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Literate people use texts. This paper puts forward reasons why it is important that adult educators should reach an understanding of the ways and contexts in which people use texts. No one, of course, denies that texts are important. But descriptions of the social roles and functions that different kinds of writing and print perform within institutions – the detail of how various documents are actually created and how they affect people in specific settings – are rare. Investigations into the social relations that exist between people and texts could be a fertile area for research: they might yield insights into many different activities, particularly in South Africa.

It is impossible to side-step all the pitfalls involved in tackling a subject that relates so directly to themes discussed by distinguished names in sociology, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, history, political theory, literary theory, media studies and other disciplines. I am familiar with some of the debates which overlap the scope of this paper, but there are bound to be other philosophical and methodological positions of which I am ignorant. To start with I make a distinction whose precise limits some may wish to dispute: it is assumed that the documents that are used in organisations can be distinguished from literary texts by virtue of their function or use. It is possible using this approach to discern a wide range of positions and functions that different documents occupy within institutional settings. In the case of academic and some other papers, certain texts can be interpreted as developing quasi-literary functions – they may, to put it another way, acquire over time an accepted status beyond that pertaining to their immediate organisational function or informational purpose. To adopt this stance is not to exclude the possibility that other kinds of difference can be discerned between texts and the enormous significance of the contents of texts is never denied, textual content clearly affects textual function. The argument here is simply that not enough emphasis has been placed on the latter and in particular that more attention should be paid to the precise description of specific habitual and institutionalised textual environments.

Some of the discussion that follows will be obscure unless the word 'text' is used consistently. The formulation I put forward is not intended as a prescriptive definition, but a useful description; it may nevertheless not be welcomed by some of those with a background in literary theory. To highlight the tangible nature of texts, the word 'text' is used in this paper interchangeably with the word 'document'. A 'text' (or 'document') is to be understood as language that is physically recorded in writing or print: this distinguishes it from all kinds of speech, live

or recorded, but not from written material stored on a computer disk. 'Text' is not used here in a metaphorical sense, that is, to mean 'discourse' (as in 'networks of practices which form the objects of which they speak', Foucault, 1972), nor is it loosely used to suggest the communication of ideas generally (as for instance in 'representations which produce meanings', Tomaselli, 1985). There is further discussion below.

The paper is structured as follows. After noting the significance of texts for universities, two short case-studies are discussed which illustrate the way that texts are commonly used. The section which follows attempts to build an explanatory framework; I go on to discuss the apparent lack of interest in aspects of texts to do with observable social interactions by many writers in the fields of literacy and literary theory. A final section briefly considers some practical implications of these ideas for adult educators.

THE USE OF TEXTS IN UNIVERSITIES.

Universities are interesting in this context for three reasons. First, they provide a variety of easily accessible examples of the intensive use of texts in settings that are highly institutionalised. Second, in many if not most countries, universities constitute a powerful domain with strong influences at individual, corporate and state levels of society. Third, the theory and practice of adult education is based in academic departments. Although the fact that universities use texts will be readily admitted by everybody, the extent to which they do so is seldom acknowledged. Except for sport and the performing aspects of the arts, every subject studied at all universities is invariably implicated with texts: irrespective of wide differences of content between subjects, the use of texts remains within essentially similar agreed habitual conventions.

It is indeed remarkable, although hardly ever remarked upon, that these conventions vary so little between departments, faculties, universities and countries with different political systems. The reliance placed by universities on texts is almost certainly not confined to the West or the North; according to Phillip Altbach writing in *Prospects*, 'the basic European university model, which was established first in France in the thirteenth Century has been significantly modified but remains the universal pattern of higher education. ... There are virtually no exceptions.' All academic institutions, he suggests, including their basic organisation, pattern of governance and ethos, remain remarkably linked to the Western academic model (Altbach, 1991: 78). Where the use of texts is concerned, strict conventions are universally insisted upon. Thus, when chemists write about the behaviour of inorganic and elementary organic matter, or people in literature departments criticise texts and theories about texts, or linguists write about language, they all use the same formal conventions of textual presentation. Even 'oral literature' and 'oral history' are formally textualised before they can be studied. And so on. Not only is the method always that of writing and the printed text, the nature of the material produced is dependent on – in many cases difficult to envisage without – the use of texts. A spoken (that is to say unwritten) anthropological fieldwork account, philosphical theory or mathematical treatise is hard to imagine.

This account far from exhausts the ways in which texts are integral to universities. The entire structure of academia is regulated by material that is contained within texts. Academic progress is dependent on students' and teachers' ability to manipulate ideas using texts: deficiencies are immediately reflected in low academic ratings through poor assignment marks and exam results.

Academics themselves cannot be successful unless they produce skilful written work in texts. Finally, the power and prestige that universities hold as institutions partly depends on their ability to produce textually-skilled individuals who are able to run institutions that support modern bureaucratic states. A university that decided to stop using texts would cease to produce written work and be very quickly dismissed as unacademic by other universities. A crucial component of academic life, then, might be summarised as: the ability to understand, criticize, compare and create texts. But the interesting thing is that no academic or, for that matter, any other institution ever completely relies on text-handling skills; speech involving socially dynamic face-to-face interaction is always necessary at various points in education, as it is in many other human communicative processes.

TWO CASE STUDIES DESCRIBING THE USE OF TEXTS

What is the relationship between organisations and texts? This section looks at two examples (which are of necessity abbreviated) of the use of texts within essentially academic settings. The focus of these case studies is on the different way in which documents perform active, power-distributing and affirming roles. The questions that appear to be of interest and which have influenced my choice of case-study are – from a textual point-of-view – how do texts contribute to the structure of organisations and how do they affect face-to-face behaviour? And – from a social interaction angle – what social settings are texts used in? The first case-study describes the creation of a document that is overtly concerned with organisational structure; the second is about a situation where documents that are already in existence and not overtly concerned with structure, nevertheless regulate social roles to a surprising extent, including some social interactions that might appear to be spontaneous.

Strategic Planning Exercise held at the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, December – 1992 January 1993

A firm of consultants, Gouws Woods and Partners, was hired to co-ordinate strategic planning sessions. These were held 'in order to develop a strategy and action plans that would facilitate the development of the Centre [of CACE], its people and its community.' (McLachlan 1993.) The exercise took place over three days in a seminar room at CACE and involved six administrative and seven academic staff constituting a majority of the employees.

A Gouws Woods partner acted as facilitator; he stood by a tripod that was provided with ample supplies of newsprint. The CACE staff (including the Director) sat with note-taking materials at tables facing the tripod. All participants were encouraged to produce spontaneous ideas within a predetermined series of written headings that appeared to have been used previously by the consultant for commercial institutions. An abbreviated version which numbers the headings in the chronological order that they were presented is given below:

1. *Expectations*
2. *Core values and beliefs*
3. *The CACE mission*
4. *Ideal future state for CACE*
5. *The vision for CACE*
6. *Internal organisation*

7. *The task environment*
8. *Priority key success factors*
9. *Other key success factors*
10. *Strategic objectives*

Various spoken ideas were produced more or less spontaneously by participants under each of these heads. They were first written out as listed possibilities, then assessed more critically and rejected (by being crossed off the list if they were deemed by the meeting to be inconsistent, illogical, overlapping, unclear or under an inappropriate head). Progression from each head to the next was not allowed by the facilitator until consensus or agreement had been reached: this procedure was established when he stated to the meeting that there was no point in continuing until the beliefs (2) as expressed in a mission statement (3) had been worked out and written down; this was done by the Director after the first session in the light of oral suggestions made during the day. A final report listed the strategic priorities that had been produced during this exercise (McLachlan, 1993).

In this case study a text with potentially profound consequences for the future activities of an organisation was created using a ritual rooted in consent, participation and co-operation. The process of document creation described here has the overt function of prioritising choices for alternative possibilities of long-term action within the organisation. But it also enabled democratic ideas to be put into effect using group consent and coherence to reach decisions. This procedure in effect legitimates the social and political power that the document itself may subsequently possess. It can therefore be understood as a means of solving (and anticipating) disputes. The case study also shows how documents can be created in situations that involve group dynamics. Participants of different status contributed in ways that reinforced the acceptance of decisions; the document was built up in cumulative stages on newsprint with every stage being open to oral challenge.

The whole process physically centered on the document: participants sat in a semi-circle around the newsprint and reacted to what was written as well as to each other. It constituted the centre of a configuration of social power; in subsequent meetings when decisions are taken discussions will refer to the document, since it has properties of permanence not possessed by speech.

Note how the participants agreed to accept categorisations that were suggested by an external facilitator although they were free not to. It is clear that the relationship between the text and the people who create it is far from being deterministic. All the same, those who are subsequently affected by it will be unable to question the document without difficulty: the decisions have become 'hard', as it were, by being recorded. If handled in ways that are not legitimated or accepted, the creation of documents can subsequently encourage, rather than inhibit, disputes. Early in 1992, a report circulated in CACE that contained controversial statements. Many of the subsequent discussions centred around how the text had been originally created and whether it represented the views of the participants. Finally, it has to be born in mind that this text must be seen as acting within a matrix of roles and actions that involve a host of other documents in circulation or on file, which also support and refine ongoing structural relationships within the organisation.

The CACE strategic plan deliberately set out to address organisational issues. Other texts that are overtly about external issues are also used at the same time to structure social relationships and regulate status. An example of these processes can be seen in the second case study.

The 1992 SAIDE Launch Conference at the World Trade Centre in Johannesburg

This was intended to be an educationally important event within a South African context. A total of 126 people attended the conference; 93 came from tricameral government departments, universities, technikons, trusts, associations and NGOs. These people were designated as 'delegates' in the conference documentation. There were also three international 'institutional representatives', mainly from distance education universities. The conference was organised around four kinds of event which can be categorised as follows:

1. *Plenary sessions. Keynote speeches, presentations, and report-backs. Prepared speeches were read out, followed by short question-and-answer sessions except for the Minister of Education, who left immediately after his speech).*
2. *Working group sessions. Self-selected groups were asked to produce reports on five key areas: Higher Education, Technical and Vocational Education, Teacher Education, Primary and Secondary Education and Adult Basic Education. Each group started from a discussion paper prepared by an academic of high standing. After sessions a minute-taker summarised the debates into structured texts for refinement at later sessions. Final drafts were read out at a plenary session*
3. *Poster sessions. A three-day exhibition by the 'representatives'. Distance learning materials – prospectuses, teaching materials and course evaluations – were displayed at stalls. Delegates moved between displays, conversing and writing down details of materials, addresses and fax numbers.*
4. *Informal social meetings. These took place during breaks and at meals, cocktail parties and evening socials. Informal discussions took place between the conference organisers, the representatives and the delegates, all of whom mixed at will to obtain further information, cement old ties and make new professional contacts. Assessments, criticisms, exchanges of ideas and discussions of personalities took place freely, without being recorded (SAIDE 1992).*

Each person who attended the conference was given a named role laid down in prior documentation. The 'delegates', 'representatives', chairs and secretaries of working groups and plenary sessions, the convenors and their adminstrative staff, were all given text-legitimated titles. Without these roles, most people would have felt unable to carry out in some cases highly skilled tasks and the conference would have been a failure. The four kinds of sessions can be categorised according to the strength and quality of accepted relationships that existed between people and texts.

1. In plenary sessions texts were dominant: presenters read from their texts and only a small proportion of time was permitted for unplanned (untextured) questions and answers which nevertheless, still centered on the texts (none in the case of the Minister, giving a glimpse of how texts can be used to stifle discussion).
2. In working group sessions more face-to-face (non-texted) interactions took place in situations not dissimilar to case study 1. The object of the exercise here was to build texts that might possess long-term political significance beyond the conference. The activities of chair and

minute-taker had a strong influence on the contents of final drafts.

3. In poster sessions 'delegates' and 'representatives' were allocated roles not unlike buyers and sellers in a market place – uncontrolled activities within structured limits that were understood by the participants. Texts were still the focus of activities, but their role here was as potentially powerful objects open for inspection, discussion, comparison, explanation and, in many instances, for sale and distribution.
4. At the informal untextually structured gatherings texts were subsidiary, and 'soft' face-to-face social interactions predominated. Even here, the texts that had been read and created at earlier textually focused events constituted a considerable proportion of many discussions. The freer, more critical exchanges were undoubtedly conditioned by the knowledge that they would not be recorded.

The two case studies exhibit many features which could be considered normal, or at any rate, unexceptional. In the second case study participants were 'placed' in relation to particular texts and obliged by socially accepted convention to conform to specific roles laid down in specific documents. In both case studies texts were created for use within highly specific settings and invested with a clearly defined organisational status. Other institutional settings obviously have their own texts whose influence and position would not be precisely the same. Can any general conclusions be put forward that might apply to all situations? I suggest the following three points. First, the social processes that take place round documents can be clearly described. Although contemporary literate institutions use texts and speech in an apparently integrated manner, they do so in ways that are distinct; documents are created, read, discussed, interpreted and acted upon in specific open social contexts that are accepted by social convention. Second, all texts used in institutions have socially significant functions. Many are overtly concerned with organisational structure and relationships, but even the texts whose expressed printed content concerns other kinds of information are nevertheless used in ways that are socially and structurally significant within the organisation. Job applications and the minutes of meetings are examples of texts overtly (but not solely) concerned with organisational functions; the reading of a seminar paper is an example of a text whose expressed content may be nothing to do with institutional matters or the social relationships that exist between reader and listeners, but whose use still reaffirms certain relationships and structures. Finally, two prima facie axes of interest or criteria can more tentatively be suggested for use in analysis of textual situations: a) written-influenced, fixed, 'hard' social structure that has been 'laid down' in or by texts, and b) live, fluid, 'soft' social interaction that takes place within textually prescribed limits.

A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

Having presented the reader with two examples of how texts interact with people in institutional settings, this section considers a possible theoretical stance which incorporates a view of texts as social agents. The implications of this will lead me to query some other approaches and non-approaches to texts.

To begin with, any theory must take into account the fundamental importance of differentiating between spoken dialogue and written script. The primary function of writing and print is to

act as an effective means of communicating messages: any messages and an infinite number of them. Writing achieves this aim in ways that live speech is physically incapable of doing, ways which use visible symbols that have properties different to sounded symbols. Precise scriptographical and typographical conventions have developed over the centuries which are adhered to by radical activists, reactionaries, flat-earthers, nuclear physicists and indeed anyone who wants to reach an audience using writing. Stubbs (1980: 109) gives the following features as being exclusively available to each language mode:

Conversation or speech

Intonation, pitch, rhythm, speed of utterance, pausing, silences, variation in loudness, aspiration, laughter, voice quality, timing, simultaneous speech, co-occurrence with proximic and kinesic signals, and availability of physical context.

Writing

Spacing between words, punctuation including parenthesis, typography including styling of typeface, italicization, underlining, upper and lower case, capitalization, inverted commas, graphics, borders, diagrams, tables, abbreviations, logograms, layout, paragraphing, spacing, margination, pagination, footnotes, headings and sub-headings, permanence.

None of the above features in either list has a direct equivalent in the other language mode. Other writers have distinguished writing and speech from the point of view of the factual consequences for humans everywhere that are bound to result from the differences in the physical properties of the two communicative modes. Finnegan (1988: 12-20) has produced a clear and, I believe, uncontroversial account. She suggests that the main areas of difference can be summarised as follows (my interpretation):

1. Enabling communication over distance.
2. The divorce of writer from audience.
3. Permanence over time.
4. The accumulation of information over time.

The closer one looks at the two forms of language, the more complex and far-reaching the consequences appear to be. In the face of such enormous differences it would seem to be foolhardy to maintain that writing and print can somehow be interpreted as a seamless extension of communication from an unmodified Saussurian language model, where language is explained as a single arbitrarily grounded system of signs whose meaning depends on their difference. The conventions are not the same. Writing and print cannot be understood as being freely interchangeable with speech.

It also seems reasonable to assume that the physical form of the message, the social landscape, the kind of language used and the status attached by hearers and readers to the speaker all influence each other. The message is not neutrally conveyed and language is not communicated in a social environment that is the same whether it is spoken or written. Many writers – Bakhtin, Foucault and Derrida among them – appear to follow Saussure in failing to appreciate the importance of this distinction. It is certainly true that most sentences spoken in literate societies can, with some change to their significance, be written down. But this statement fails to take

into account the intimate connection between social context and physical form. Whereas live speech is almost instantaneously heard, a written message is, as a rule, composed and read on different occasions. The fact that it is often physically possible to interchange a spoken with a written word is irrelevant: distinctive kinds of language have for practical reasons become confined to each mode and these are strongly reinforced by institutional conventions. If this were not so, there would be little point in writing or printing anything. The social situational differences in which written and spoken messages are created – the study, the office desk and the library for writing, for instance, compared to open forums, social gatherings and personal interactions, where there is open-ended conversation – result from the distinctive properties of the two language modes as communicative systems. Each is used for different purposes in separate contexts and results in further distinctions of use that are socially significant, but not apparent if one simply looks at the semantic meaning of individual words.

The complexity of all the differences between writing and print on the one hand and speech on the other can, in consequence, be more accurately explained if the social roles of texts are included as a necessary part of any descriptive framework. We noticed in the case studies how documents are, in comparison to live speech, 'hard' and unreactive. But texts can act within a social context whose characteristics are, by contrast, 'soft', oral, unpredictable and reactively dynamic. Put simply, pre-determined textual messages interact with people in social situations involving undetermined or unpredictable spoken reactions. Two important points need to be stressed here. First, texts are not people: unlike people, texts are physically inanimate objects which cannot react to their environment; once created they are typographically tied to a fixed point in time. But, second, one can agree that people are interpreting as well as being influenced by the texts they read. There is thus a continuously developing social dialogue taking place between old texts, people, and the new texts that are created by the interaction of the two which happens mainly in institutional contexts). Readers can interpret this as a variation on the Platonic-Hegelian-Marxist progression: thesis – antithesis – synthesis.

To summarise so far. Written and spoken language have different characteristics with some functions that are not interchangeable. Texts can be understood as being used to participate in dialogic, social situations outside themselves, while remaining, unlike the fleeting speech from constantly changing people, internally, textually, and physically fixed over time. Questions concerning how texts are used in relation to speech are in consequence sociologically significant. It follows that post-literate societies cannot be accurately or adequately described in terms of models that ignore the effects of texts, or treat social processes as if they were the same as textual narratives or a number of alternative texts or discourses. Sociology provides examples of the former, literary theory of the latter.

Neither literacy studies nor literary theory have paid sufficient attention to the institutional roles of texts and the reasons for this are different in each case. The academic range now covered by literacy scholars is enormous. Perhaps as a result of resonances contained in the word 'literacy', however, it commonly seems to be assumed that the field is about – that is to say it ultimately derives from the study of – a cognitive process, namely, the acquisition of skills. These skills can be said, I think without controversy, to involve the interpretation and communicative use by individuals of symbols requiring the eye, brain and hand. In accordance with this perception, academic interest and political concern tends to be devoted to the processes and

consequences of this literacy, which could be crudely summarised as attempting in various ways to assess the difference that literacy makes to individuals and to societies. Some (Vygotsky 1962, Ong 1982, Goody 1977, for instance) concentrate on the alleged cognitive consequences of acquiring literacy, while others (Finnegan 1988, Bloch 1989, Street 1993) stress the political and ideological nature of ways in which literacy is taught.

The subject of literacy is somehow approached as if it referred to something definite and real. The role of texts and documents is assumed to be a separate area of concern. On this perception text use can be more or less equated with the skills of reading and writing. Thus, texts are the raw material of reading and the product of writing – the other half of an equal equation, as it were. Since the use of documents is almost wholly dependent on the acquisition of literacy, it can be said with confidence that texts cannot occur in societies whose members do not possess reading and writing skills. It therefore seems perfectly reasonable to attach more weight to the skills of literacy than to the documents created and used by those skills: to treat them, if not as secondary, then at least as a separate concern better dealt with by other disciplines. Once stated, however, it is clear that this reasoning can be turned on its head: for if literate skills cannot be exercised without texts, then surely we should be looking closely at the different kinds of texts that exist. Perhaps there is a connection to be made here with the different kinds of literacy proposed by some writers. In order to sharpen literacy skills we need to understand the conditions in which different texts are used and the social roles that they perform. In short, ' literacy' is the name of the game; this has meant that literate processes, literate and illiterate people, and literate and pre-literate institutions are seen to constitute the main fields of research. But 'literacy' is just a word. As Graham Greene said, 'we invent the words and make arguments from them' (Greene, 1978). What if 'literacy' is an inadequate label to describe what happens in situations where texts are used?

Focusing attention away from the institutional aspects to those of individual performance and cognitions, 'literacy' looks only at the lower or basic end of the skill scale; yet it is clear from experience – particularly in South Africa – that basic literacy skills are merely the beginning. They represent one end of an almost infinite gradient of performance abilities that can be learned and whose acquisition increases an individual's expressive power to use texts. Concentrating on the acquisition of cognitive skills without enquiring how those skills are going to be used, means, to give just one example, that the studying and learning difficulties experienced by many students who come from backgrounds with strong oral influences are liable to be confused with aptitudes or even poor intelligence. Such difficulties are not identical to reading and writing problems but form an extension of them. Both can be described as pertaining to the ability to handle texts.

An entirely different set of problems comes into play where literary theory is concerned. In contrast to literacy studies, discussions involving texts are at the heart of the most controversial debates. Many people see the investigation of texts as fitting naturally within the scope of this discipline, augmented by the comparatively new area of cultural and media studies. I am not competent to pronounce in detail on some of these debates. Nevertheless, the particular area that concerns us – the investigation of the social role of texts – appears once again to be ignored. There are epistemologically linked factors which seem to account for this. First, discussions take place within a framework that derives, directly or indirectly, from the philosophic and pedagogic interests of literary theory. Writers with this background often take a rather dim view of

empirically-based research. There exist in every literature, however, a rich store of evocative and detailed descriptions of a variety of institutions by well-known authors, and the place and function of literary texts in the past is debated by writers of the new historicist school, such as Jean Howard. It is nevertheless true that the variations within and between institutions in the use of texts are not seen as an appropriate concern and the actual analysis of texts in literary theory tends to remain anchored in textual contents, whether of meanings, significations, social and political significances, hidden and overt ideas, and so on. The difference between text and speech is not fully recognised – everything can be a 'representational practise'. Perhaps part of the reason may be to do with problems concerning the definitions of texts.

This is a major stumbling block from our point of view. In literary theory the meaning of the word 'text' varies from writer to writer. For Greenblatt (1990: 75) it is a 'work of art', for Spivak (1990: 229) it appears to be among other things 'postcoloniality'. The term has been promiscuously broadened to include a variety of (what I would claim are non-textual) social processes. Some writers use 'text' with deliberate post-structural ambiguity to mean several different things. One example will have to suffice. Roland Barthes (1975) suggests that 'The Text must not be thought of as a defined object ... the Text ... is a methodological field ... the text cannot stop at the end of a library shelf ... it always implies an experience of limits ... the Text practices the infinite deferral of the signified ...' and many formulations besides. The point at issue is quite stark: if the object of study is the relation of texts to non-textual environments, it is necessary to distinguish the two. Clearly, if any communication is referred to as a text, there is bound to be a descriptive confusion. If, on the other hand, this is not a confusion, but a philosophical statement that the world really is a text, or is like a text, then it is being put forward that there is no essential difference between the written language contained in texts and live speech. If so, any project that sets out to investigate the non-textual context of texts must by definition be a pointless waste of time.

Finally, although many writers claim that they are interested in non-literary texts, what they often mean by this phrase is popular literature rather than the documents that are used everyday in organisations.

To summarise. For different reasons, neither literacy studies nor literary theory adequately considers the social environments of texts. There seems to be a dearth of systematic ethnographic investigations into the use of the documents and texts that in many instances are in front of our- noses. In the final section I briefly suggest how these ideas might be applied to the practice of adult education.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

There are a number of commonsense reasons why adult educators ought to be interested in the use of texts. These are for the most part obvious, but some of us may have been mesmerised by the word 'text' or the word 'literacy' into believing that when teachers and educators at the grass roots of adult education are busy creating and teaching from texts, they are doing something that is 'normal'. We should all perhaps start to think about the cultural significance of what is happening. We may be bridging orality-literacy boundaries or we may be asking people from NGOs to change their textual practices. But if texts are a source of power, we have to bear in mind that a potent legitimation of social structure, hierarchy and control lies within the

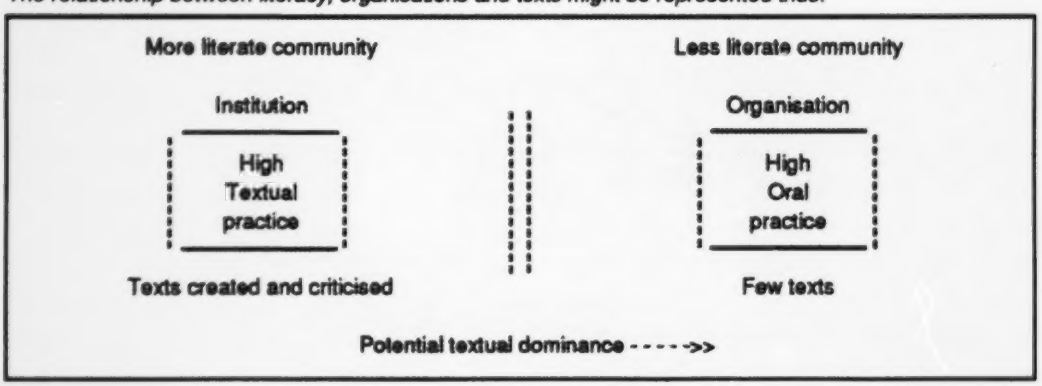
domain of education regardless of what is being taught As Linda Patti (1991) recently put it, 'Even oppositional discourses such as critical pedagogy which purport to provide the answers are themselves "masterful" discourses.'

I give below five statements to back my assertion that research into this area ought to be given priority.

1. All contemporary societies are dependent on texts; most institutions would be unable to continue without them.
2. Universities are textually based to an extraordinarily high degree.
3. Adult educators use texts. They do so in ways that vary and to some extent remain undocumented. They use texts to regulate their internal structure and as a normative method of teaching. They also teach students how to use texts beyond the teaching situation (but see 5 below).
4. People who enrol on the sort of courses that adult educators teach and co-ordinate, that is to say courses to do with social change and empowerment, can often be characterised as being literate but deficient in textual skills.
5. The NGOs that are targeted and fostered by adult educators vary to an unknown degree in the ways they use texts. Adult educators do not themselves always know how or to what extent their clients will use texts when they return to their NGOs.

A caveat should be sounded at this point. If one is attempting to analyse the roles that specific documents play in institutions that radically differ from universities – like NGOs for instance – the fact that people manage their lives fairly well in communities that do not depend on texts has to be taken into account. Placed alongside more oral, less literate communities, the world of academic institutions, commercial companies and government bodies, is forbiddingly large and complex. The face-to-face kinship and community structures that to some extent help to articulate community organisations are different in kind to bureaucracies with their intense, complicated lines of stratification. Other kinds of appropriate behaviour are expected; actions which are habitual to the participants of NGOs do not merely replicate on a smaller scale the behaviour that takes place in academic environments and bureaucracies. Oral traditions communicate value systems which relate to power and social status. Here, the crucial component oiling the wheels of organisations might be described as an ability to communicate in face-to-face situations

The relationship between literacy, organisations and texts might be represented thus:



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In these circumstances what sort of research questions should we ask about textual frameworks? I suggest some below.

1. How do the AE programmes on offer use texts?
2. Why were they selected or created and how are they presented?
3. Are there different texts for teachers and learners?
4. How do we expect learners to use texts, how do they actually use texts?
5. How are texts used in the target NGO organisations?
6. How does this differ from the way we use texts in our own departments or institutions?
7. To what extent do the communities of which the organisations are a part use texts?
8. If we are suggesting students use texts in ways that change their organisational practice, are we expecting the organisation to change, the students to forget what they learned, or move into a more textual kind of institution?

Many of these questions have the advantage that they are capable of being answered. Much of the data is already out there in the form of books, newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets, letters, certificates and so on, waiting to be used; social activity in relation to these documents can also be described. In addition, most people are prepared to be relatively honest about what they read: the contexts of texts are habitual and rather less private than personal conversations. The answers, unlike the answers to many literacy questions, often refer directly to group or organisational behaviour. They might give us some interesting indications about the relation of our courses to the communities we purport to serve, and in consequence give us some clear indicators about how to improve the impact of those courses. If students come from communities which value experience unmediated by the written word, we as textually sophisticated educators should attempt to help them reinterpret that experience in textually integrated way. Without the catalyst that the best education can provide, they will remain disempowered in a world dominated by powerful textual institutions.

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IS THE METHOD MONSTER EVER A MOUSE?

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To teach or not to teach methods and strategies in a professional development course for educators of adults, that is the question. Whether it is better in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous cognitive dissonance and guilt or take up arms against ambivalence and indecision?

(Apologies to William Shakespeare)

INTRODUCTION

During ten years in a university-based professional development course for educators of adults the author has become increasingly aware of her inability to reject outright the teaching of methodological skills and strategies. This presents something of a dilemma since she does not intellectually or consciously espouse technicist, objectivist views of the nature of knowledge or educational purposes and process.

This paper explores the author's dilemma from a psychological perspective, in the hope that conference participants will be interested in sharing their thoughts on the matter and adding depth to the discussion.

Most adult educators will recognise the many faces of technicism as a method monster. Aspects of the creature's modus operandi are highlighted and an account of a short personal learning experience, of purely anecdotal value, gives hope that the monster we try so hard to keep at bay can sometimes be as harmless as a mouse. It may even further the real aims and purposes of those adult educators who work within a counter technicist paradigm.

WHAT IS THE DILEMMA?

Malcolm Muggeridge was an English journalist and broadcaster who was well known for his biting wit, irreverence, cynicism and absolute commitment to freedom of thought. To everyone's surprise he became a member of the Catholic church in his latter years. When asked how he, of all people, could have taken such a step he replied, 'If you want to enjoy the freedom of the oceans you first have to become a slave to the compass.'

Only the most foolhardy mariner would venture into the disorientating world of sea and sky without a method of finding direction. The compass has been a tried and trusted instrument for

centuries. But 'to become a [competent] slave to the compass', demands familiarity with its limitations and capabilities in the unstable context of tides, currents and winds. Its usefulness depends on the sophistication of the person who reads it.

The argument presented here suggests that, as in the case of the mariner, the outcomes of teaching methodological skills and strategies depend more upon the educator and the nature of the institution than the instrument. The philosophy, psychology, aims and purposes of the educator, and the culture and stance of the institution, will colour and lend specific influences to an educational encounter. Perhaps methodological skills and stategies in themselves need not necessarily raise concern to adult educators who do not espouse a technicist tradition.

In this paper, South African adult education is visualised as a vast, largely uncharted sea of educational demands, needs, challenges, responsibilities and accountabilities upon which university-based educators of adults continually set sail in somewhat leaky vessels. To make matters more hazardous, they have to contend with persistent cross-currents of conflicting philosophical discourse, whir-pools of oppositional sociological and psychological perspective, ideological and socio-political tidal waves and no certainty about how to steer the ship. It is a miracle that we are still afloat and making some sort of steerage way.

Any analytical psychologist will immediately understand that the picture presented above is the projection of a troubled mind. Afraid to come clean, the author has hidden from a nagging sense of ambivalence and guilt in the nautical metaphor. Slung in a hammock, as the adult education ship pitches and rolls, she is unsure whether she lives in the world of the humanist, interpretive, non-directive, mainly experiential learning based school of adult education practice or whether she is in reality a covert technicist. Arguments for stepping firmly into the former tradition of adult education are immensely persuasive (Rogers, 1983; Brookfield, 1986 and 1987; Mezirow, 1990 and 1991; Miller and Saddington, 1992). But to do so means accepting that teaching methodological skills and strategies (the domain of the technicists) is of limited value in the professional development of educators of adults (Millar and Saddington, 1992).

Yet to set sail without a method of navigating the ocean is surely unwise? Can it be justified to launch educators of adults onto a treacherous adult education sea without an introduction to some pathways which link intellectual insights to reality, or to putting aims and goals into practice?

Finally, the realisation that educators always model methodological skills and strategies, whatever philosophy informs their practice, raises cognitive dissonance to a disturbing level. What sins against the learner might have been committed here, albeit unwittingly, from the ostensibly safe haven of a counter technicist paradigm?

Caught in this dilemma, the author's choice of ego defence strategy is to rationalise. Since intellectually, she cannot bring herself to join the technicist school, some reappraisal of the method monster in action seems a logical move, especially as university-based adult educators struggle to respond creatively and usefully to one of their roles in present day South Africa: the professional development of educators of adults.

THE METHOD MONSTER

In ancient times, sailors lived in terror of great mythical sea monsters. These multi-limbed, many headed creatures were believed to surge out of the deep and devour whole ships and all

their crew. Today a similar monster prowls the adult education sea. Adult educators, by and large, live in fear of its potential ability to gobble up every educational move towards liberation and empowerment, and away from the idea that education is simply a process of delivering packaged information. The monster is shunned, avoided, attacked but not yet slaughtered, despised, ostracized, but is very much alive, active, and nurtured elsewhere. Could we possibly be misjudging the beast? Is our fear truly justified? Are we missing something?

On the assumption that knowing one's enemy is the first and perhaps most essential step in defeating an attack, a very brief analysis of the nature of methodological skills, strategies and techniques is offered, followed by sketches of seven of the monster's heads.

One way of visualising methodological skills, strategies and techniques is as theoretical conceptualisations of learning and its promotion, translated into action plans. They are what comes between a perceived learning gap and the crossing of that space: the interactions that take place between teachers and learners. They may be nothing more than a medium of communication. And although the medium may sometimes be the message, it is not necessarily so. Nor, in any case, can it be assumed that the message is automatically destructive. If Vygotsky's work is to be taken seriously (Sutton, 1980), it is the quality of mediation, not the technique itself, that coaxes and propels learners forward into the Zone of Next Development. None of this can happen, however, in the absence of methodological skills. But educators, learners and learning purposes can all wield influence on method choices and the nature of teaching outcomes.

The method monster has at least seven aspects which cause the author anxiety in her unavoidable role as a model of vicarious learning. These are characteristically Mechanistic, Oppressive, Normatively orientated, Simplistic, Tyrannical, Expert, and Reductionist. The sketches and explanations which follow are related to the education of adults.

Mechanistic world views and objectivist philosophies guide the monster in pursuit of its prey. These justify both manipulative teaching strategies, and measurement (judgement) of learners in various ways, such as their learning progress, and prediction of learning potential by some test of ability/selection. Prescribed methods and strategies for promoting learning and measuring are the monster's weapons. These often come carefully concealed as experiential learning techniques, or openly strike out as competency-based learning. The seduction of these methods is that learners often enjoy using them because they are fun, or offer powerful rewards in the form of demonstrable chunks of learning achievement. But by prioritizing the value of results, this approach can gloss-over important philosphical debates more congruent with adult education aims: does the end justify the means in education (or anywhere else for that matter) and what happens to the liberating/empowering aims of adult education if manipulation is openly acceptable?

Oppression results from systems imposed on people who are powerless to resist them. This is clearly true in a political sense. Such oppression often leads to feelings of learned helplessness and can leech motivation and energy levels for considerable periods of time. The method monster induces inertia of creative thought by handing out prepared teaching methods and strategies. These can subvert learners' attempts to produce and claim ownership of their own means of problem solving in educational encounters. Human psychology being what it is, most of us find it much easier to fall back on a pre-packaged frame of reference than to take the risk of being innovative. Thought is thus constrained rather than encouraged to test new ground.

Normative traditions are the method monster's natural environment. It thrives on brushing aside respect for the heterogeneity of adult learners, and casting them into a homogeneous mould. Moulder (1989: 147) has pointed out, for example, how playing games to learn about values does 'not cater equally for everyone's learning style.' And adults as learners rarely fit into norms of any kind.

Simplistic pathways through the thick forests and swamps of learning and teaching relationships in multicultural, multi-contextual circumstances are the method monster's preferred way of travelling. It is easy to describe the route to fellow monsterlings, and as long as they do not step off the path into the world of personal/cultural values, and other species' perceptions of the world, they will make the journey to a safely predetermined point. Vertical thinking and the maintenance of thinking sets holds sway in the interests of educator psychological safety. Methodological skills and strategies can become the straws to which learner educators cling, diverting them from in-depth exploration of the complexities of learning, towards shallow mastery of teacher techniques.

Tyranny of learners' minds is also characteristic. Seductive technology provides an easy way to impose one conceptualisation of an educational issue, process or problem on another, by presenting attractive texts and packages containing 'how to' strategies (this is how to understand leadership, solve problems, or determine learning styles, etc.). The risk of objectifying a learner rather than promoting a contributor in a learning dialogue is scorned in the method monster's dictatorial realm.

Experts and perceived expertise of all kinds give the method monster a frighteningly elevated position of psychological power over ordinary mortals. Experts know, ordinary people must genuflect. Power can be maintained, and learners made subject by methodological skills and strategies which often come wrapped in the mantle of the expert. These packages are the brainchildren of household names in the fields of education and training. The culture of uncritical respect surrounding apparent expertise can keep threats of challenge at bay. But this promotes disempowerment and undermines learner self-confidence. The need for power and control to ward off insecurity can win the day against the developmental needs of the learner.

Reductionism is the final face of the method monster. A drive to seek understanding of the fascinating, holistic complexity of human learning and education, and the multifactorial nature of adult learner and educator relationships can be derailed by deceptively simple techniques which claim to help learners learn. Such a technology is inevitably reductionist.

An alternative perspective

In face of the picture painted above, cognitive dissonance and guilt assume paralysing proportions. Yet the following short account of an adult education experience offers some justification for reappraising an apparently well substantiated distrust of technicist tactics and influence.

My mother introduced me to adult education well before the age of five. She was learning Russian partly out of respect for a people she admired but also to ward off her terror of the bombs that rained down on London in the nineteen forties. I can still picture a red cloth vocabulary book full of strange writing and can hear her learning lists of words by heart. She often sat completing written exercises with the help of a grammar book. These were set to her teacher

and came back with red corrections. She went to the local school to learn pronunciation in the evenings. She suffered some mockery from bigots and had had only limited formal schooling as a foundation for this learning.

In retrospect, method monster approaches were clearly at work. The process she endured so willingly could fairly easily be described as Mechanistic, Oppressive, Normatively based, Simplistic, Tyrannical, dominated by the Expert, and Reductionist. What seems to have been an uninspired, essentially didactic method of teaching language might have been expected to be demotivating, depressing, disempowering, mentally stultifying, unrewarding, limiting, meaningless and destructive.

Although she never became a Russian scholar, she was able to delve into Russian literature, which she loved, and thus learn more about the country and people that fascinated her. Later in life, she was able to transfer the language learning skills she had learned and never forgotten to a new love: French and French literature.

In fact, the whole experience for her could only be described as intensely Meaningful; Opening up a wide world of further learning; Useful in providing a structured learning approach which proved to be enabling for her; Self-confirming, and confidence building; and finally highly Energizing, exciting and emotionally satisfying throughout her life.

And that, borrowing Rudyard Kipling terminology, is an example of the method MONSTER's ability to become a MOUSE.

What exactly the factors are which control the outcomes of different methodological and paradigmatic approaches to the education of educators of adults is a matter for much further discussion and debate by those who find the question important. But the argument presented here permits a rudimentary observation in relation to the question posed on the first page of this paper which was:

Should the teaching of methodological skills and strategies be excluded from professional development courses for educators of adults?

A great deal of empirical evidence is still required to make a sufficiently powerful case for exclusion. But, for the time being, there does not seem to be any inherent contradiction to teaching some methodological skills and strategies to fledgeling educators of adults even if working in a counter technicist paradigm.

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CHANGING ADULT EDUCATION PRACTICE THROUGH INDEPENDENT STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

"Higher education ... is primarily concerned with 'academic competence'. The particular notions of self-directed and autonomous study are intrinsic to the larger concept of 'academic competence'. Independent study is a 'capability to be developed' and 'comes close to being if it is not, indeed, the major goal of all education'."[1]

"Independent Study" as a form of practice in higher education is spreading widely overseas. This paper poses Independent Study as a particular form of teaching practice that has much to offer University-based adult educators in terms of developing a student's ability to become a "producer of learning".[2]

The paper begins with an attempt to define Independent Stud,y as well as a description of some of its historical and theoretical roots. Then the Independent Study process and two of its important elements in its use are discussed. Finally, the focus narrows dramatically and briefly to my own attempts to include Independent Study in formal teaching, and I will describe how I have used it in the Advanced Diploma Course for Educator of Adults at the University of Cape Town. I will also discuss some of the responses to Independent Study by students, and its potential for changing adult education practice.

WHAT IS INDEPENDENT STUDY?

For many in education, teaching is seen to occur through the construction and transmission of a textbook or a curriculum that mediates a body of knowledge about a particular subject. This is knowledge constructed for ease of transmission, consumption and assessment in formal education. It is an objectified and portable commodity. However, in recent times, this view of teaching has been challenged and new forms of education practice have been sought.

One form has been the development of teacher skills, i.e. there are procedures that teachers may adopt to develop learning and the capacity for learning.[3] The emphasis here lies on professional practice, in particular on the use of a specific method. In adult education there are many such methods, of Freirean and Rogerian extraction in particular. The important characteristic of these is their professional orthodoxy: they acquire the normative status of good practice. Probably the most distinctive current example of such practice directed at the development of

"learning" is "experiential learning", which is in fact a model of the management of learning.[4,5] The consequence of this method for learners is understood to lie in the development of a reflective capacity of some kind.

A second form is also located in the realm of professional adult education practice, but the key considerations that shape this practice are of a political nature: they are to do with the location of power and authority in educational transactions. In practical terms the principles invoked are those of "curriculum negotiation" and "learner responsibility".[6,7] The curriculum for adult learners is not to be constructed "off site" as it were, but within the class or learning group itself. In this way, learners participate in the contestation and shaping of curriculum knowledge and process, and their learning is a consequence of the assumption of such responsibility. The task of the educator is the relocation of teacherly authority. Independent Study takes this task to its limits.

> "Independent Study is the student's self-directed pursuit of academic competence in as autonomous a manner as he (sic) is able to exercise at any particular time."[8]

This oft-quoted definition of Independent Study has provided education with a term that covers a multitude of practices. From a recent survey of the literature and a range of overseas university and college prospectuses it is clear that Independent Study means different things to different people.[9] Very broad and different categories of practice are subsumed under the heading "Independent Study"[10]. For some institutions and educators, the "self-directed pursuit" and "autonomous manner" are limited to learning at "the time, place and rate suited to (the student's) own particular needs".[11] This form of Independent Study is limited to, and better described as, correspondence courses with individuals completing work at home and sending it in on due dates. For other educators and institutions the definition is taken to include practices within which students plan and manage their own programmes of study. At the School for Independent Study (Polytechnic of East London) the meaning given to Independent Study is "you (the student) decide what you study, and how; you decide what pieces of work you will do, and what will be assessed. You don't decide by selecting modules from a menu; you actually write your own course".[12] It is this latter understanding of Independent Study that I wish to explore in this paper.

The historical and theoretical roots of Independent Study

Independent Study has its beginnings in two practices – the tutorial system at Oxford University, begun in the 15th Century, and the elective system at Harvard University, introduced in 1869. The key to the Oxford tutorial was, and still is, the personal attention students received through being assigned personal tutors, and the way in which these tutors then adapted the type of instruction according to the individual needs of their students. At Harvard, and later at a range of other universities in the United States, the move was a cautious one from allowing students some choice in what they should study to the introduction of Independent Study in the 1920s. Initially, the aim of Independent Study was to "stimulate the superior student to do more work and better work than he (sic) would ordinarily do without individual supervision".[13] While earlier Independent Study practices were often restricted to "gifted and very bright" stu-

dents, Bonthius, Davis and Drushal challenged this notion in the 1950s by suggesting that "if the values (of Independent Study) are considered central in undergraduate education it would seem in order to point course work toward them".[14] This suggestion prepared the way for Independent Study capability becoming a goal rather than just a process in education. This new emphasis was supported by the growing sense that education should be about "learning how to learn" rather than the learning of knowledge as facts which very quickly become dated and of little value to the learner.

> "The independent study student thus learns how to learn, which is more fundamental than learning what to learn and in the process, begins to associate learning with something he or she is in charge of, can develop, can structure, can do alone, instead of something imposed from the outside, taking place in a certain setting, taught."[15]

This was a view that Cardinal Newman had argued for in 1852, when he wrote that "self-education in any shape, in the most restricted sense, is preferable to a system of teaching which, professing so much, really does so little for the mind".[16]

Students in conventional courses often complain that their learning is blocked by the structure of the curriculum and the limits to the content being studied. When students are free to pursue their own interests then the work which they do is the most satisfying and important for them. The process of finding out something for oneself, the searching for the answers to questions and problems that face them personally, fits with two of the key theorists underlying Independent Study. Karl Popper's theory of education, about learning based upon a process of problem formulation and solution, as well as John Dewey's ideas about problem-based learning and discovery were key to the forms of Independent Study practice developed in Britain and the United States.[17]

Staff often argue that students are either uninterested in or incapable of Independent Study.[18] Very often this lack of interest can be attributed to either restrictive educational practices, which do not encourage taking responsibility, or the very real sense of the student staying with the known and therefore familiar ways of learning rather than venturing out into the unknown. While it is true that students will always be dependent on staff to varying degrees, the issue of self-direction has more to do with an ability, which can be developed, than a capability.[19,20] This ability has to do with "motivation, curiosity, a sense of self-sufficiency and self-direction, ability to think critically and creatively, awareness of resources and some ability to use them".[21] All of these are key skills for the self-directed learner and important goals for education.

> "The single most important contribution which a school or college can make to its students is to develop in them the capacity to continue learning throughout their lives."[22]

The roots of the theoretical development of Independent Study are varied, and staff at the various institutions bring a range of educational ideologies to the practice of Independent Study. Very often there is considerable friction between different staff orientations, yet these varying ideologies, from the "respectable" Dewey to the "radical" Marxist, continue to impact on Independent Study and enrich its practice.[23]

THE INDEPENDENT STUDY PROCESS

Stewart lays out four main activities that occur in Independent Study: the defining of learning objectives; the formulation of a learning plan to meet those objectives; the learning process itself and, where necessary, the finding of resources; and the ongoing evaluation and final assessment of the learning achieved.[24]

From actual practices studied, clearer definition can be given to Stewart's four activities and Independent Study can be seen to have seven steps:[25]

1. Admission – applications are screened, students interviewed and initial student ideas of what they want to do are encouraged and discussed.
2. Study programme proposal ("learning contract") planned – most times within the course itself and a planning period is provided and facilitated.
3. Proposal considered and accepted (possibly after changes).
4. Students work on study plan – in this period students read widely, write essays and communicate their ideas and thinking through papers and projects. Subject specialists act as guides.
5. Reviews by both students and staff occur at various interim points. These evaluations sometimes result in the study proposal being changed but most times ensure that the study is on track.
6. A final product (very often a written piece of work) and a final review of the learning process are completed.
7. Assessment (with varying student roles) uses the final product, the final review and work done during the course to determine whether Independent Study has been successful or not.

Two key aspects of the Independent Study process are staff supervision and the various degrees of freedom for the student in choosing a subject area to focus on. As Independent Study practices have developed, there have been a variety of responses to what supervision means, how the student-staff relationship can best be used, and what degrees of freedom could or should be allowed students in making their choices or decisions about their curriculum.

> "Independent Study does not mean 'independence' of either subject or teacher,"[26] and "Independent Study must be a rigorous learning activity and is not susceptible to trivial decisions by students."[27]

Students themselves warned of the undesirability of wandering "aimlessly in his (sic) studies".[28]

In some Independent Study processes, collaborative work is encouraged (even insisted upon) and meetings, either individually or with student peers, are arranged. The need for ongoing guidance and support is seen as crucial. One of the arguments for collaborative work is that it is an essential aspect of personal and professional development, i.e. the ability to work with others is an essential life skill or value. In some institutions, the use of collaborative work is also used to fight individualism.

Key elements of Independent Study practice

I wish now to examine two key elements in the practice of Independent Study: the use of learning contracts, and the roles of staff and students.

Learning Contracts

One of the simplest rationales offered for preparing a detailed learning contract is that "If you don't know where you are going it is difficult to know how to get there".[29] More concretely, the learning contract is seen as a "structure to aid the student in conceptualizing the components of the learning project" and a "process of refining and clarifying specific learner tasks".[30] Another view of a learning contract is as "a means for making the learning objectives clear and explicit for both the learner and the field supervisor".[31]

While there is disagreement about whether the learning contract should be called a "contract" or a "proposal", what is clear is that it provides a framework which needs to be constructed carefully and with full recognition of the responsibility and tasks the student is taking on. Very often, a large amount of time is spent by the student on constructing and writing the learning contract, with some institutions offering special courses for this either outside or within the programme itself.

A further advantage of preparing a learning contract is that "experience in proposal writing, even though it may be at an elementary level, is a credit highly regarded by employers, for it evidences the person's ability of observation, understanding, creativity, organization, practical judgement, resourcefulness, planning, as well as written communication".[32] It is surprising therefore that very few institutions actually give credits for this major effort in "educational planning".

From two institutions overseas,[33] as well as some of the suggested designs in theory, the following common content elements for a learning contract emerge:

1. Clear and specific learning objectives and focus (very often related to long-term learning goals);
2. An awareness of the learning resources needed;
3. A time scheduling of activities and deadlines for work completion;
4. Method(s) to be used and work to be done in completing study;
5. A sense of how the learning will be assessed or evaluated; and
6. A detailed list of the proposed outcomes.

Some learning contracts also include:

1. A more personal sense of self that brings the learner to this new learning opportunity;
2. A set of arguments as to why Independent Study is the best way to accomplish the learning goals;
3. A preliminary sense of the field to be studied – either by producing a detailed book list or by showing a preliminary understanding of the field in some way; and
4. Clear indications of how progress will be reviewed and evaluated.

Learning contracts are all, to varying degrees, negotiated (some may be re-negotiated during the time of study) and validated. Dressel and Thompson propose a four-way agreement between student, faculty sponsor (personal tutor) field supervisor (subject specialist) and institution, and in reality these four parties do in most cases actually validate or sign the contract.[34]

In all cases, learning contracts are seen as one of the most important elements in the Independent Study process.

> "Contracting for (or proposing) an independent study project should be done carefully ... a project precisely planned and approved in advance minimizes the likelihood of disappointments occurring further down the road."[35]

Roles of staff and students

When Independent Study students enter a course, they, like students in other forms of higher education, are often confused as to their role and relationship to the staff. The relationship is most times seen as one of control. When the learning contract is being written, it is important to discuss the issue of staff control and the associated problem of dependency. The norms of the institution, the rules and conventions governing the course, and the role of the staff have to be made explicit.[36] This process of discussion and negotiation of the rules and conventions gives students access to and an understanding of what is required of them, and the parameters of their responsibility. In Independent Study, where there is an emphasis on the student operating "in as an autonomous manner"[37] as possible, the amount of responsibility that a student takes in the learning process is important.

Learning contracts help to clarify the issues of responsibility and control by containing sections on learning objectives, learning methodologies, access to learning resources, the process of assessment, and a procedure for revising the contract.[38,39] As we have seen, the learning contract is a commitment by both staff and students to a style of working and role relationship. Learning contracts can reduce the ambiguities in the teaching/learning relationship by making clear the "nature and limits of authority" and help place the responsibility for learning and achievement on the student.[40] The sharing of responsibility, which is a sharing of power, does not mean a handing over or an "abrogation of power" by the staff, as they still have a range of responsibilities in the roles they must play, from which they cannot simply withdraw.[41] The use of "learning contracts" helps to make explicit the issues of control and responsibility, and allows for continuing negotiation and redefinition of these concepts.

Weber outlines four roles for staff as "subject-matter experts", "facilitators", "interpreters" and "counselors".[42] In these roles, he sees staff as assisting students to decide on their focus; providing access to resources; giving feedback on progress; helping with planning; explaining concepts; and supporting students. "In short, faculty advisors, guide, assist, question, clarify and challenge."[43] Friedman adds a further role of "editor" in that he saw staff as directing students as they wrote papers and final products.[44] Other descriptions of staff include advisors; guides; evaluators (assessing, monitoring and giving feedback); and helpers in developing (and carrying out) work done by the student.[45] Other roles include critics; mentors; givers of support; and securers of access and accreditation.

Very little is mentioned in the literature on the practices and theory of student roles. Clearly their ability to function as independent learners is important, as well as their ability to plan, design learning experiences, negotiate, be creative, question, find resources, communicate, engage in self-evaluation and initiate things. Weber sees it as essential that Independent Study students are self-directed learners, with the ability to decide what it is they want or need to learn; work out clear ways of achieving their objectives; and evaluate their own progress.[46]

The roles of staff and students in Independent Study are clearly different in some respects from a normal teaching situation, and each person will have to find the role(s) that are both appropriate and comfortable to enable the Independent Study process to work.

INDEPENDENT STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Independent Study is one of the three curriculum options available to students on the Advanced Diploma for Adult Educators in the second year of their course.[47] The course consists of a series of phases that students must follow:

1. Attend a workshop on the Independent Study process and learning contracts in the first year of their studies.
2. Write a first draft of a learning contract. This is handed in and returned with comment to the student.
3. Write the final version of a learning contract. This is considered by the Department and accepted or not.
4. Register for the option at the beginning of the second year.
5. Work on the Independent Study programme of study – individually, group tutorials, individual meetings with staff, write a mid-term paper/essay and a final product.
6. Complete a critical review of their learning through the Independent Study process.[48]
7. Be part of the assessment process.

In 1993, we have five students doing this option. In preparation for the option, 16 students attended a workshop in November 1992 on the Independent Study process and learning contracts. Then some seven students wrote draft learning contracts and received feedback from me on them. Of these, five students submitted final learning contracts, and these were accepted by the Depart- ment. Acceptance means that we believe that the programme of study outlined is at least equivalent to the work that will be done in one of the other two options that students could choose to attend.[49]

The five students are presently working on their study programmes and meet with me individually, once a fortnight, to discuss problems, issues, questions and ideas they have in relation to their particular focus.[50] We also all meet once a fortnight to discuss the learning process they are going through, and comments heard and worked with include: "I'm ... on track ... in a slump ... doing a little light reading ... behind schedule ... feeling I should be writing ... overloaded ... grappling with choices ... feeling better than before ... keeping a journal is helping". These meetings have spent time on learning contracts, critical review, reading and using resources, writing, interviewing, assessment, and time management.

What is clear, both this year and in 1991 when the option was first offered, is that the Independent Study students are working hard and spending massive amounts of time on their study programmes. They are committed to their subject fields and are taking real responsibility for their own learning. While the 1993 students have, as yet, not completed the option and assessment still lies ahead, they are developing skills and ways of learning and confronting learning issues and problems that most students at university are protected from by the mediation of a teacher.

In addition the planning of their learning contracts and the writing of critical reviews are important opportunities to develop skills and insight into curriculum planning.

CONCLUSIONS (OR DO YOU REALLY WANT TO DO IT?)

"Independent Study is the hard way of getting it done!"[51]

This comment, echoed by students at UCT, suggests that the process of Independent Study is not always easy – for the student working alone and giving him/herself the necessary push and drive can demoralize many – for the staff the need to let go of control of the learning process and to believe in the capability of the student is difficult. And while an Independent Study programme can be "fraught with unpredictable problems and inevitable anxieties" the advantages for the student who chooses this route cannot be overlooked.[52]

Robinson's early study of Independent Study at Stanford University found that among the advantages of Independent Study there was to be found: "An early awakening of intellectual interest, leading to more effective study and thought; the opportunity to advance at a greater rate of speed than would be the case in a regular class; an expansion of interests; and a genuine love of reading and learning."[53] He saw students as having been "set free" from "regimentation and routine" and hence able to accomplish more.[54] His work is clearly supported by more recent research which found that, through Independent Study, "learning becomes more personalized and meaningful"; "higher cognitive behaviors" are developed; topics beyond set curricula are studied; retention is increased; students acquire a range of skills not normally learnt (they become self-directed learners); students can perceive "greater applicability of what they learn", and students "learn a willingness to take risks, how to deal with the consequences of one's actions, and how to persevere in spite of obstacles".[55]

Brown lists some 17 reasons why students can profit from Independent Study. Some of these were the increased ability to assess printed materials; the acquiring of library research skills; and that the student becomes a "producer of learning".[56] Other reasons to be found in the literature include "fostering excellence"[57] and the way learners gain "confidence and investment in their own learning process ... high motivation or persistence in accomplishing their learning contracts".[58] Students engaged in Independent Study are also gaining a "life competency" which is beyond academic competency, and discover how they can be "self-moving, self-driven autonomous agents, rather than to be merely responsive to pressures from outside".[59]

In another course run at the University of Cape Town, students who chose an Independent Study option described the experience as an opportunity within which they "attached importance to myself", "gained confidence" and "used my own brain! – didn't let others think for me". The excitement expressed by these students is also reflected in the quality of the work they produced, and shows a transformation of students from passive to active learners; from being "overwhelmed with resources" to "taking control". As one student expressed, "I choose Independent Study as I saw it as an opportunity to learn how I learn".[60] The learnings by these students is echoed in students on the DipHE at the School for Independent Study in London, who felt they had gained confidence, felt more able to deal with people in authority and tackle issues rather than avoid them. High academic standards are also evident on the DipHE.[61]

Students however, have often been critical of Independent Study in terms of it's "jargon", and staff have been criticized for ignoring concrete difficulties faced by the students and "floating around seeing everything through a wall of educational philosophy".[62] Lack of agreement between staff about what counts for assessment, and uncertainty about staff and student roles, have added to the difficulties faced by students. The results of these difficulties have been

growing student apathy, indifference, and an uncertainty in terms of their own self confidence. For some students, the process of Independent Study has increased nervous strain and anxiety and decreased contact with other students. One of the major difficulties facing students entering Independent Study is that they come from a pedagogical model, within which the traditional elements of teachers teaching, knowledge needing to be assimilated and examinations waiting to be written have shaped the student's approach to education. The move from the predictable and comfortable environment takes effort and a willingness to risk.[63]

The difficulty for staff of deciding just how much help can be offered to students before "independence" becomes "dependence" is a further problem, particularly when students begin the process and are vague and uncertain about what they should be doing.[64] Research has shown that "back-up" support for students is essential to ensure that Independent Study is not just for the "superior" student, and that a slow movement from dependence to independence can be attained through a staff/student relationship which focuses not only on knowledge but also on skills, abilities and attitudes.[65]

For the staff, the benefits lie in the area of working with highly motivated students on topics that the staff are interested in as well. Independent Study also offers the opportunity for course development as ideas for new programmes can be piloted with individual students. On the negative side, students can, and do, take up a lot of staff time. The specialist tutor situations are mostly one-to-one and, although "class" time is decreased considerably in Independent Study, the individual contact hours go up.

The forms of Independent Study which are student designed and managed are a challenge to our educational practice wherever the control of and responsibility for the curriculum is owned solely by the educators. Independent Study as a form of practice has much to offer education in South Africa in terms of student empowerment, through giving students a voice in what they will learn, how and when they will learn, and how their learning is to be assessed.

> "The extent to which ... independent study schemes have broken new ground successfully, and have produced an efficient and relevant mode of undergraduate education, which encourages both student learning and student satisfaction, is a matter of urgent concern for the rest of higher education."[66]

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2 B.F. Brown, *Education by appointment: New approaches to Independent Study*, Parker Publishing Company, West Nyack, New York, 1968, p.46.

3 Clive Millar, and Tony Saddington, *How do you teach learning?*, paper presented at Kenton-at-Broederstroom, 30 October – 2 November 1992.

4 In Experiential Learning the learner is taken through a series of stages or a learning cycle that enables the learner to reflect and learn from experience. The most common cycle being Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. (The model proposed by Kolb, et al., begins with an experience ("concrete experience"), which is followed by reflection ("reflective observation"). The reflection is then assimilated into a theory ("abstract conceptualisation") and finally these new (or reformulated) hypotheses are tested in new situations ("active experimentation"). The model is a recurring cycle within which the learner tests new concepts and modifies them as a result of the reflection and conceptualisation.

5 This practice is being elaborated and refined through international conferences devoted to experiential learning, and a growing body of journal articles and texts.
Some key references to Experiential Learning are:

a) Richard Boot, and Michael Reynolds (eds), *Learning and Experience in Formal Education*, Manchester Monographs, University of Manchester, Manchester, 1983.

b) Tom Boydell, *Experiential Learning*, Manchester Monographs No.5, University of Manchester, Manchester, 1976.

c) David Boud, R. Keogh and David Walker (eds), *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning*, Kogan Page, London, 1985.

d) David Kolb, Irwin Rubin and James McIntyre, *Organizational Psychology: an Experiential Approach*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1971.

e) Susan Weil and Ian McGill (eds), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning: diversity in Theory and Practice*, SRHE and Open University Press, Milton Keynes, England, 1989.

f) Costas Criticos (ed), *Experiential learning in formal and non-formal education*, Media Resource Centre, Department of Education, University of Natal, Durban, 1989.

g) John Mulligan and Colin Griffin (eds), *Empowerment through Experiential Learning: explorations of good practice*, Kogan Page, London, 1992.

(Note: In discussing Experiential Learning I am not referring to the term as used to describe the assessing and accrediting of life and work experience.)

6 Clive Millar, Tony Morphet and Tony Saddington, "Curriculum negotiation in professional adult education", in *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 18(4), 1986, pp.429–443.
Clive Millar, "Educating the educators of adults: Two cheers for curriculum negotiation", in *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 21(2), 1989, p.161-168.
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7 R.G. Brockett and R. Hiemstra, *Self-direction in adult learning: perspectives on theory, research and practice*, Routledge, London, 1991.

8 P.L. Dressel and M.M. Thompson, *Independent Study*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1973, p.1.

9 J.A. Saddington, *Independent Study: from theory to practice*, 1990, (unpublished paper in which the Independent Study work done at six overseas institutions is discussed).

10 J.A. Saddington, *Independent Study: an option for student empowerment*, paper presented at Kenton-at-St Johns, 26 – 29 October 1990.

11 Ohio University, Lifelong Learning Programs Handbook, *Independent Study Bulletin 1987–88, Lifelong Learning Programs*, Ohio University, 1987, p.6.

12 Polytechnic of East London, School for Independent Study Leaflet, *Polytechnic of East London: Diploma of Higher Education by Independent Study*, 1989, p.2. (emphasis in original)

13 E.E. Robinson, *Independent Study in the Lower Division at Stanford University 1931 – 1937*, Stanford University Press, Stanford University, California, 1937, p.11.

14 R.H. Bonthius, F.J. Davis and J.G. Drushal, *The Independent Study Program in the United States*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1957, p.217.

15 Lamden and Worly, 1976, quoted in P.G. Friedman, "Independent Study, Fieldwork, and Peer Teaching", *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No.25, March 1986, p.91.

16 J.H. Newman, *On the Scope and Nature of University Education*, 1852, quoted in K. Percy and P. Ramsden, Independent Study: two examples from English higher education", *Research into Higher Education Monographs*, Society for Research into Higher Education, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey, 1980, p.3.

17 K. Percy and P. Ramsden, Independent Study: two examples from English higher education, *Research into Higher Education Monographs*, Society for Research into Higher Education, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey, 1980, p.12.

18 Dressel and Thompson, op cit. p.92.

19 ibid. p.7.

20 ibid. p.92.

21 ibid. p.7.

22 B.F. Brown, *Education by appointment: New approaches to Independent Study*, Parker Publishing Company, West Nyack, New York, 1968, pp.29-30.

23 D. Robbins, *The rise of Independent Study*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1988, pp.142–157.

24 Stewart paraphrased in the description of "Independent Study", *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, op cit. p.84.

25 Saddington, 1990 (a), op cit.

26 Robinson, op cit. p.14.

27 Brown, op cit. p.31.

28 Robinson, op cit. p.72.

29 P.G. Friedman, "Independent Study, Fieldwork, and Peer Teaching", *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No.25, March 1986, p.92.

30 C.E. Kasworm, "An examination of self-directed learning as an instructional strategy" *Innovative Higher Education*, Vol.8, No.1, Fall/Winter 1983/1984, p.47.

31 M. Knowles, *The Adult Learner: A neglected species*, Gulf Publishing, 1979.

32 Friedman, op cit. pp.92-93.

33 In the forms of learning contracts used at Vermont College in the USA the key elements are:

(i) the main focus and goals of the study;
(ii) the resources and methods of working to be used, as well as a timetable for completion of the programme;
(iii) a preliminary bibliography;
(iv) what products are to be produced; and
(v) the criteria for evaluation and assessment.

In the forms of learning contracts used at the School for Independent Study in London the following main headings are to be found:

(i) A personal profile, which could include previous experience and learning, present skills and knowledge, entry qualifications, references and a summary of competence. This may also include long-term goals and intentions;
(ii) A full description of the proposed programme which could include learning goals for the course, proposed study (i.e. title, area of focus, brief description and aims and objectives) and the programme of work (content, context and operation i.e. method, timetable and reading list);
(iii) Resource implications (people, equipment, etc.);
(iv) A justification for the proposed study programme; and
(v) The proposed assessment scheme outlining methods of and criteria for the final assessment.

34 Dressel and Thompson, op cit. pp.39–40.
35 Friedman, op cit. p.92.
36 L. Stenhouse, *Authority, education and emancipation*, Heineman, London, 1983.
37 Dressel and Thompson, op cit. p.1.
38 D. Jacques, "Problems of authority in experiential learning", in Boot, Richard and Reynolds, Michael (eds), *Learning and experience in formal education*, Manchester Monographs, University of Manchester, Manchester, 1983, pp.51–61.
39 Stenhouse, op cit.
40 Jacques, op cit.
41 P. Allman, *Adult development: implications for student support*. Paper presented at "Comparative International Seminar on The Local Support of Distance Students in Continuing & Higher Education", The Open University, East Midlands Region, Nottingham, 23–28 September 1982. p.12.
42 D.R. Weber, "Independent Study: Direction is the key to success", *Innovative Higher Education*, Vol 13, No.2, Spring/Summer 1989, p.87.
43 ibid. p.87.
44 Friedman, op cit. p.91.
45 Saddington, 1990 (a), op cit.
46 Weber, op cit. p.86.
47 See Appendix A.
48 See Appendix B.
49 The other two options are on Literacy and Community Education and on Adult Education and Work.
50 The five students are working on the following: Writing a manual for accessible material

writing for ESL people and a booklet on fundraising; How to run ASP tutorials and deal with the maths phobia; The design of interactive displays in an anatomy museum as a way of learning; Organisational development theory and practice; and Developing a curriculum for basic audiology.

51 Quote from a student at Vermont College during the colloquium in August 1989.

52 Percy and Ramsden, op cit. p.58.

53 Robinson, op cit. p.64.

54 ibid. p.84.

55 Description of "Independent Study", *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, op cit. pp. 837–838.

56 Brown, op cit. p.46.

57 Friedman, op cit. p.87.

58 Kasworm, op cit. p.50.

59 Fulton 1966, quoted in Percy and Ramsden, op cit. p.7.

60 Comments from students whose chose an Independent Study option during the 1990 Community Adult Education Programme offered by the Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town.

61 Percy and Ramsden, op cit. p.30.

62 ibid. p.24.

63 ibid. p.58.

64 ibid. p.47.

65 ibid. pp.60–61.

66 ibid. p.1.

APPENDIX A

Advanced Diploma for Educators of Adults
1993 Curriculum Option: INDEPENDENT STUDY

This option is based on the view that it is important for adult educators to be able to operate as reasonably autonomous and independent individuals. Students taking this course will be responsible for planning their own individualised curriculum (learning programme) and will then work on their own and in collaboration with others to achieve this study programme. Staff will not tell students what to study, rather they will provide structures within which students will operate. The staff will act as facilitators of this self-directed learning, and their job will be to provide guidance and help, but ultimate responsibility for learning will lie with the student. The option requires each student to identify a topic, skill or problem in the field of adult education which is of special interest to him/her. This then becomes the focus for the student's own individual programme of study.

The course is also founded on the belief that education should, among other things, help people to become more competent to operate in a wide variety of work and social settings. The programme of study should therefore develop the skills and abilities of the students, rather than just give them more knowledge without the wherewithal to use that knowledge.

The option begins with a period of planning which ends in a personal statement by the student outlining his/her study commitments for the course. This negotiated statement takes the form of a personal learning contract, accepted by the staff, which reflects the programme of study, the intended learning results, the methods of learning and the basis for assessment. (The "programme of study" could include attending the whole or part of a course being offered at UCT or another tertiary institution in Cape Town.) The learning contract needs to reflect not only the institution's demand for quality, but also the student's needs, goals and experiences. The course culminates in a "product" which forms the basis for assessment.

Requirements for acceptance onto the Independent Study option

Acceptance onto this option is not automatic and students need to apply to take this option. However, any student may go through the process outlined below and submit a learning contract for consideration.

To apply for the Independent Study option the following steps need to be followed:

1. Attend the "learning contract" workshop on Saturday, 7 November 1992 from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm.
2. Draw up a draft learning contract and hand it in by 14 December 1992. You will be able to consult with Tony Saddington during the period 7 November to 14 December, if you wish to, about your learning contract.
3. You will then receive written feedback on your draft learning contract.
4. Hand in your finalized learning contract by 1 February 1993.
5. Your learning contract will be considered by the Department and you will be notified whether it has been accepted (i.e. validated) or not before registration in February 1993. Only students with a validated learning contract may register for this course option.

Requirements during the course

1. All students doing this option will be expected to attend a fortnightly group tutorial (of two hours) which will be used to discuss and deal with issues about how the learning programmes are going. A 75% attendance figure is expected. The group tutorials will include time in which to say where you are and how you are doing; share learning resources; share common learning problems and solutions; and have discussions/seminars/tutorials run by both staff and students on issues of common interest.
2. You will need to meet once a fortnight (for one hour) with an individual staff member to discuss and develop your programme of study, evaluate progress, and receive help and feedback which will assist you to achieve your learning goals. The times of these meetings will be individually negotiated and need not occur during the usual 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm Monday and Thursday session times. A minimum of six such meetings is required.
3. Write a paper/essay during the programme of study (probably mid-term). This could be presented to the group and will receive feedback from staff. The form of this paper/essay could be a trial run for the final product.
4. Produce a final product.
5. Write a critical review of your own learning.

Assessment

While the criteria and form of assessment for this option are negotiable, the assessment mark should be based on three elements: (The percentages given in brackets are also negotiable but give an indication of the importance of each element.)

i) Writing the final accepted learning contract. (10%)
ii) The final product – which may include a mid-term paper. (70%, i.e. 50% for final product and 20% for the mid-term paper)
iii) A critical review of your own learning. (20%)

Evaluation of Independent Study option

As this is the second time we are offering this course, all students who register for the option are asked to help with an evaluation of this form of study. This will require some time being spent during the group tutorials and one final session after the option is completed. You may also wish/be invited to co-author a paper on this form of study.

Further questions

All questions and queries should be addressed to Tony Saddington in Room 4.40, Education Building or phone: 650-2885.

APPENDIX B

Advanced Diploma for Educators of Adults
Critical Review

(A review of your work and progress)

The Independent Study option does two things simultaneously:

1. You learn about a topic, skill or problem in the field of adult education which is of special interest to you. This is your own individual programme of study.
2. You "operate" as an educational planner. You plan your own individualised curriculum (learning programme) and then work on your own and in collaboration with others to achieve this study programme. Staff act as facilitators of this self-directed learning and their job is to provide guidance and help, but ultimate responsibility for learning lies with you. You write the learning contract and you monitor your own learning. The assessment process underlines this by allocating some 30% to these two processes.

Why a critical review of your own learning?

The object of this option is not just to learn something, but also to experience the Independent Study process. Independent Study is built on the notion that while many educators believe that opportunities to bear responsibility within the learning process should be given to learners, the taking of responsibility by the learner is however often restricted by the teacher's and educational institution's behaviour, methods, norms and procedures. One definition of "Independent Study" states that "Independent Study is the student's self-directed pursuit of academic competence in as autonomous a manner as he (sic) is able to exercise at any particular time".[1] Further, "the independent study student thus learns how to learn, which is more fundamental than learning what to learn, and in the process, begins to associate learning with something he or she is in charge of, can develop, can structure, can do alone, instead of something imposed from the outside, taking place in a certain setting, taught".[2] So if "Higher education ... is primarily concerned with 'academic competence' then the particular notions of self-directed and autonomous study are intrinsic to the larger concept of 'academic competence'. Independent study is a 'capability to be developed' and 'comes close to being if it is not, indeed, the major goal of all education'."[3]

How do you do a critical review of your own learning?

This is really up to you. Some thoughts and ideas are:

a. You could chart your progress through the Independent Study option, noting your successes and failures, highlighting each element of your learning contract as it occurred in relation to your learning goals.
b. Start collecting evidence for your critical review from Day One. You have been doing work since the November 1992 workshop – keep your evidence in such a way that you'll be able to find it again. Date it, so you'll know when you did it.

c. Start critical by reviewing your progress as a self-directed learner – what are the blocks and problems; the delights and surprises; the disappointments and the frustrations you face each week?
(Two examples from your own work to date that I know of are (i) building a theory and testing it out and (ii) being given a resource by the "ever-helpful-me" which, on reading, seems to provide you with all the answers, leaving you feeling a little cheated in terms of working it out for yourself.)

d. Prepare "mini-reviews" right from the start. After each piece of work, review how successful it was, what you learned from doing it, and what you'll need to do next.

NOTES (Appendix B)

1. P.L. Dressel and M.M. Thompson, *Independent Study*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1973, p.1.
2. Lamden and Worly, 1976, quoted in P.G. Friedman, "Independent Study, Fieldwork, and Peer Teaching", *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No.25, March 1986, p.91.
3. K. Percy and P. Ramsden, Independent Study: two examples from English higher education", *Research into Higher Education Monographs*, Society for Research into Higher Education, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey, 1980, p.6.

RURAL ADULT EDUCATION

ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICA'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION

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THE MASTER PROBLEM

A cursory look at structures and processes in the country, tends to suggest that South Africa, even more than her sister countries in the southern African region, is a country that exhibits three sets of characteristics. These include characteristics typical of those countries often spoken of as First World countries; characteristics that are associated with the descriptions of the so-called Second World countries; and lastly, characteristics that are largely exhibited by the so-called Third World countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia.

One is further given the impression that, owing to her peculiar history, South Africa has, throughout history, tended to pay more attention and commit more resources to her First World country component, at the expense of the other two components, with the result that in the wider world, South Africa is lumped together with the industrialized countries of the North and, as such, is largely excluded from the list of developing, low-income countries. It does, therefore, appear as if in her quest for First World status, South Africa has tended to ignore the bulk of her population, who comprise the rural masses and those in informal settlements, commonly referred to as squatters and backyard dwellers.

At this point in her historical progression, South Africa's First World component can be said to have, despite international economic sanctions, experienced significant economic growth that has greatly widened the gap between the 'haves' of the First World component, and the 'have nots' of the Third World component. From this master problem, several sub-problems can be identified. The following are among the few that may be viewed as of concern to South Africa's current and future social engineering endeavours:

Socio-political and economic changes

Following the release of the longest serving prisoner on 2 February 1990, Comrade Nelson Mandela, and the unbanning of all political organizations engaged in the struggle for freedom and justice, the amalgamation of the abovementioned components of the nation of South Africa has become ever more urgent and imperative. The mechanisms for tackling this task are many and varied. They can be said to include such possibilities as the issuing of decrees by the State President, the passing of appropriate legislation by the Legislative Assembly, and/or the simple free movement of populations of the three components identified, in an osmotic manner, resulting in a re-birth of a non-racial South Africa, in which individuals and groups of individuals do

not simply tolerate, but genuinely accept one another's company and/or presence. Nevertheless, the process of bringing these three components together is not and will not be an easy matter in current and future South Africa, as it is not so much a political or legislative issue, but an issue of attituditional change – and therefore an issue for education as the principal catalyst.

Expanded need for general education provision

The socio-political and economic changes that necessitate that nation-building be placed at the top of the priority list, come together with the need for the provision of expanded general education. Admittedly, the historical and socio-political deprivations suffered, in the main, by the Third World country component have bequeathed to the emerging nation an appreciably high level of illiteracy and inadequacy of craft and technical skills among a large section of the adult population, while at the same time, bequeathing warped human relations ideas among the population of the First World country component. There will, therefore, be an urgent need for not only correcting the commissions and omissions of the past, in the area of education and training, but also for creating a broad-based structure for providing general education to all age and population groups.

Rapid technological change and escalating unemployment

Closely related to the need for the expansion of general education is the issue that of rapid technological change and escalating unemployment. Rapid technological change in society, assessed in the context of a new South Africa with such a history as is referred to above, will require extensive training and retraining of a sizeable section of the population of the Third World country component. This is crucial to the enhancement of productivity and the stimulation of economic growth, and will also go a long way in reducing unemployment.
Unemployment, as we all know, is a problem that tends to lead to industrial stagnation. Thus, when a country starts experiencing a high level of unemployment, it tends to experience, among other things, low growth of demand for industrial goods and a drop in both private and public investment, especially in the areas of infrastructure.

Nature's vagaries

Nature's vagaries, particularly the deteriorating ecological situation in the country in general and in agricultural endowed areas in particular, as demonstrated by persistent drought, is yet another of South Africa's current problems which is likely to draw significantly on the country's financial, material and human resources. Recognizing the fact that only 8–10% of the world's surface is currently used for food production, and that with the planting of crop-yielding trees, up to 75% could be developed (Kindo, 1987: 11), the persistent drought in some parts of the country is a serious negation of the rural people's endeavour to contribute significantly to the world-wide food production goal.

For instance, the persistent drought in many parts of south Africa and the Southern African region as a whole, has seriously affected the production of staple food crops like maize, beans, sorghum, etc. In the 1991/1992 production season, the production of maize, the staple food for the majority of South Africa's population, can be said to have dropped down to zero level. Admittedly, the cherished goal of self-sufficiency in maize production which, in the early eight-

ies appeared to be tantalizingly within reach, has been dashed in those parts of the country that, despite being known as important production regions, are slowly being strangled by nature's vagaries.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

These and many other political, socio-economic and physical problems such as nation-building, unemployment, high rate of illiteracy, ecological degeneration, etc. currently characteristic of the South African scene, signify a two-pronged threat to the country – poverty and ignorance. As such, there appears to be a need for social developers, particularly adult educators functioning in both governmental and non-governmental structures, given the fact that adult educators have the ability to combine and balance the skills of the community developer and those of the theoretical education practitioner, that they maximize the advantages that accrue to the beneficiaries. In other words, it would appear that the solution lies in "community education", i.e. taking measures that lead to the enrichment of the lives of the people of South Africa and their authentic liberation.

Clearly, in all forms of social engineering, education has a crucial role. Dean Rusk has this to say about the role played by education in development:

> "I think if we look at the problems of development in country after country outside the West, we shall find that people are the bottleneck, and this means that education has a crucial role to play.... The democratic institutions cannot exist without education, for democracy functions only when the people are informed and are aware, thirsting for knowledge, and are exchanging ideas.... In the under-developed economies, education is a key to most rapid and more meaningful economic growth." (Dean Rusk, quoted in Peters: 1970: 6)

The above statement embodies the axiom that education is a crucial factor in development and that developmental objectives cannot be fully achieved without education. This axiom moves us closer to the International Council for Adult Education's (ICAE) strategy for literacy as planned for 1987–1991 the motto of which read: "People's right to learn: mobilizing for literacy partnership" (Blakey 1981: 250). The background to the motto as described in the International Council strategy is:

- The need to mobilize all possible resources, human, material and political for promoting literacy work;
- That the scope, content and meaning of literacy should be viewed in the broader context of the "right to learn"; and
- Considering the magnitude as well as the complexity of the problem of illiteracy, that the need for working in partnership at different levels in carrying out literacy work is critical for the purpose of building solidarity, sharing and supporting each other.

Working in partnership in these terms implies partnership with the learners themselve: non-Governmental Organizations with government where appropriate; inter-ministerial partnership; and partnership with appropriate UN agencies. Thus, when the axiom that education is a crucial factor in development is considered against the above summary of issues that currently manifest

themselves on the South African scene, the logical question raised is "What kind of education?" The unequivocal response to this question is "life-long education" which is, by definition and in effect, continuous. In other words, since life-long education is not terminal, but progresses from informal child education to flexible adult education, and finally to the grave, it is all-embracing. Hence, in South Africa's situation, in which a large section of the current productive population has been neglected, there remains a crying need to expand adult education as that critical segment of the life-long education process.

WHAT IS ADULT EDUCATION?

Adult education has to be discussed in two dimensions: as a field of study and a mode of action. As a field of study, adult education is a discipline within the broader field of education, just as economics is a discipline within the field of social science, biology within that of natural science, and geology a discipline within physical science (Blakel, 1981: 25). As a mode of action, adult education is flexible and embraces a wide range of learning activities, e.g. setting up producer and consumer co-operatives, clay modelling, trade union organizations, etc..

Although in the past the tendency was to try to make a distinction between adult education and training, discussions impelled by the notion of life-long education have led to a broadened definition of adult education, which encompasses an array of vocational and non-vocational activities, found in all types of agencies. Briefly stated, adult education is, in Prosser's words:

> "That force which, in its ideal application, can bring about a maximum of re-adjustment of attitudes within a society to any new and changed situation in the shortest possible time, and which helps to initiate change which evolves and imparts new skills and techniques required and made necessary by the change" (Prosser, 1967: 5).

Thus, for Prosser, adult education is a catalyst that acts on decision-making human beings, the adults, to bring about social change. On the other hand, adult education also needs to be seen as a process. As a process, adult education is part of cultural development and involves, in the main, persons who no longer attend school on a regular and full-time basis; persons who undertake:

> "Sequential and organised activities, with the conscious intention of bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding or skills, appreciation and attitudes, or for the purpose of identifying and solving personal or community problems" (Liveright and Haywood, 1968: 8).

Adult education offers the disadvantaged, or those who were not privileged in the earlier parts of their lives, a second chance to learn. Some may want to improve their practical skills, such as cultivating the land, poultry farming, bee-keeping, animal husbandry, etc.; others may want to understand themselves and their world better and to act in the light of their understanding; or they may go to classes for the pleasure they can get from developing talents and skills, including intellectual, aesthetic, physical or practical skills. These adult learners may not even go to classes: they may find what they want from books or broadcasts, or take guidance courses by post from a tutor they have never met (Bown and Okedara, 1981: 46).

WHY ADULT EDUCATION?

Adult education, more than any other form of education process, is a radical instrument of social change. As Bergevin would say: "it alters the way we think about something, changes the way we behave, and adds to our supply of information and knowledge" (Matshazi, 1983: 5).

The instructional strategy in adult education is based on a set of principles related to adult learning theory. These principles have to be continuously borne in mind by the designers and deliverers of instruction. As such, adult teaching is a client-centred activity. Consequently, teaching theory is oriented towards the needs of the participant rather than towards the information. It is, principally, a group activity directed at some community improvement. Smith et. al. argue that adult education is the balancing of intervention in the life of an individual and intervention in the community (Kindo, 1987: 11). Adult education methodology focuses on assisting people to acquire new and modified skills, knowledge and attitudes. Clearly, the acquisition of these new ways of behaving is dependent upon whether the learner genuinely accepts the new procedure and adopts it as his or her own.

In fact, during times of socio-economic and political stress, as has prevailed in South Africa during the war of liberation, adult education agencies which comprised, in the main, non-governmental organizations such as church and voluntary bodies, were called upon to try to remedy a situation where the home, primary and secondary schools had failed. Among these could be cited organizations like SACHED that has, over the years, braved the most threatening apartheid-generated storms. In other words, those adults who experienced misfortune of one kind or another were accorded a second chance by these institutions.

For instance, those who had missed out on the acquisition of basic skills such as reading, writing and numeracy, enroled with such organizations as Lilungelo Lethu Literacy Project in East London, Eastern Cape Adult Learning Project in Port Elizabeth and several other church initiated agencies like ZINGISA that continue to perform sterling work in the field of adult education and social development. The same organizations bravely met and continue to meet the needs of those requiring training in practical life-skills. Thus, despite the stressful situations that prevailed and, to some extent, continue to prevail, these adult education institutions and agencies pushed and continue to push for the development of the minds and hearts of all people. In other words, people in communities are being helped to use their ability to decide for themselves, to take their fate into their own hands, and assume responsibility for the outcome of their decisions.

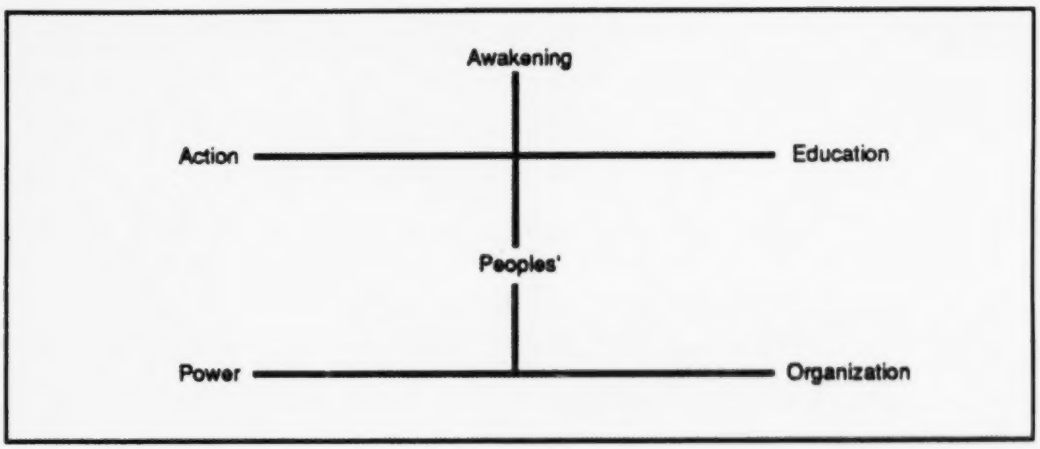
ADULT EDUCATION HENCEFORTH

Accepting the argument that the poverty of ideas in the minds of people and communities is more serious than the poverty of money, adult education comes in handy, for it stimulates, prods, challenges and questions the learner participant. Indeed, history has proved again and again that where people are fired by a sense of mission, a vision of the role they have to play in the future ordering of things, nothing prevents them from achieving their mission.

Writing about people's way of development which, by and large, is the adult education process, Kindo (Kindo et. al., 1987) identifies five steps in the process:

- Awakening;
- Education;
- Organization;
- Power; and
- Action or interaction with government.

If these steps are arranged in a star form, which suggests that when promoting people's development one has to switch from one point to any other point, according to the need of the moment, the following picture emerges:



Action and interaction involving adult learners in a learning/teaching situation is the logical outcome of the adult education process. In a way, using Kindo's model, it can be stated that the adult education process will continue to have a crucial role to play in creating awareness among individuals, groups of individuals and communities and, in the process, stimulate them into searching for more and further knowledge. The acquisition of such forms of knowledge will, inevitably, lead to empowerment, necessitating better organization, action and interaction.

Indeed, recognizing the fact that the theory and practice of adult education has, in the last few years, been broadened considerably to cover the activities of a wide range of institutions and agencies, as well as to increase the parameters of content, there is no doubt that its socio-economic significance and political weight will, over the years, grow by leaps and bounds. Adult education, certainly more than any other segment of the life-long education process, will be better equipped to solve the problems arising from the amalgamation of South Africa's "three country" components cited earlier, escalating unemployment, nature's vagaries and a host of related problems because:

(i) **It is dynamic in nature** in sofar as it is varied, flexible, private, local, national and international.

(ii) **It talks of programmes and not curricula**, recognizing the fact that learning experiences are not imposed on the learner, but result from a process of consultation between the learner and the facilitator of that learning. Thus, programmes offered at adult education institutions are, by and large, the result of a thorough dialogue between the learners and the providers of that learning – the institution.

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(iii) **It is society wide** in that it covers formal, non-formal and informal modes of educational provision. Thus, while it is true that some programmes offered at adult education institutions like the University of Fort Hare Adult Basic Education Project (ABEP) and the University of the Western Cape Credit Programme, are ladder structured in a manner resembling those in child education settings, the majority of programmes tend to be more horizontal, stressing non-directive approaches in their instructional delivery.

(iv) **It tends to be low-cost or cost-free** in that it is largely beyond the boundries of the high-technology modern sector. In other words, an 'education plant' is not important or crucial to its provision. Adult literacy classes, for instance, do take place in the open, as does much agricultural and co-operative training.

(v) **It is indefinite and flexible in time and place** in that it responds to particular needs in a practical manner, and does not run programmes over fixed periods according to a calendar year. Learning situations are created continually created, allowing learning to take place continually.

(vi) **It is learner-centred** and not always with teachers. Indeed, it is in adult education more than any other form of educational provision that the concept of self-directed learning is seen to be practised.

It is, among other things, these characteristics of adult education that will in a country like South Africa, with a strong background of rural and urban self-development and reliance, give this segment of life-long education, a niche in the current and future socio-economic and political order. As the process of nation-building begins to fall into place, new needs will be disclosed, while old ones may remain unmet. Recognizing the pioneering role of most of the non-governmental adult education agencies in identifying education and training needs for, in particular, victims of the systems based on apartheid, as well as the demonstrations of efforts in trying to meet them, one can only advocate their continued involvement within the context of the affirmative action espoused by all progressive organisations in the country.

As Rajesh Tandon (1987) maintains, non-governmental organizations represent a 'third force' beyond government and business. The NGOs in South Africa, as in any other country, represent an independent, autonomous and vibrant sector, which can work on the social and developmental problems of the country with a degree of freedom that government ministries and departments do not have, and with a sense of commitment and concern for the disadvantaged that the profit-seeking business sector lacks. They are, therefore, likely to play an ever-increasing role in the future of South Africa.

This is not to imply that everything is easy with all the NGOs in the country, nor does it imply that NGOs are not facing any problems. NGOs are, in fact, as much a part of the forces operating within the society as any other institution, organization or person. As such, they also face the problems that beset any organization in the other two sectors, i.e. government and business. But, even then, they still possess, as a sector, the necessary flexibility, autonomy, concern and commitment, which are not characteristic of the other two sectors. There is the need for NGOs to lead the co-operation and co-ordination of adult educational activities provided by all three sectors.

CONCLUSION

The importance of adult education as a field of study and a strategy for the future socio-economic and political growth of South Africa cannot be overemphasized. Undoubtedly, adult education will be in the centre of any human resource development strategy that the future South Africa may adopt. This is said in recognition of the fact that there tends to be an inherent dysfunctionality in the formal education segment of life-long education, when viewed in terms of immediate and long-term socio-economic pay-offs that could bail-out the underdeveloped components of the reborn South Africa. Further, adult education's democratic approach to human resource development enables it to continually strive to involve the masses in the planning, implementation and evaluation processes. As such, adult education has the tools for stimulating socio-political awareness and self-confidence among the people, and may break the cycle of economic poverty, social marginality and political dependency. Looked at holistically, it can be argued that adult education will, in the current and future South Africa, ensure equal and fair opportunities for all citizens, wherever they may choose to reside in this beautiful country.

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CHALLENGES FACING THE ADULT EDUCATOR AND THE RURAL MASSES

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INTRODUCTION

The key motivation for choosing this topic is a concern about the marginalisation of the rural masses, which has been exacerbated by racial capitalism. A pessimistic theme runs through the paper in the sense that an improvement of the quality of life of this constituency in a post-apartheid South Africa is highly questionable. In fact, little attention has been given to debates around the needs and issues of rural people with regard to Adult Education and Adult Basic Education by researchers of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI). Of course, it is recognised that a key frame provided by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in the abovementioned research makes provision for marginalised sectors such as women, the unemployed, etcetera, where it states that:

> The state and all social institutions shall be under a constitutional duty to eradicate all racial, gender, urban/rural and other forms of discrimination and social and economic inequalities that have resulted from apartheid. Special attention shall be paid to redressing the oppressive situation faced by farm and domestic workers and those trapped in the Bantustans.[1]

Still, this frame is mainly concerned with the programmes and interests of workers who are generally based in urban or quasi-urban areas, but the rural masses are disregarded completely. The work of COSATU is acknowledged whereby South Africa's 1,5 million farm workers will be freed from oppressive laws that have governed their lives for many years.

The concept I hold with regard to the term 'rural masses' refers to people who live mainly from the produce of agriculture and/or livestock and whose means of survival may be supplemented by wage labour in one form or another.

The main aim of the paper is to illustrate that the provision and quality of education in marginalised rural communities in a future dispensation may suffer from the same ills as experienced in the past. In support of this claim, the writer first starts to unravel a few ideas on our society that is presently in a process of transition. The paper then proceeds to locate the transitional phase within the experiences of rural communities in the Border-Kei region. Finally, a bleak picture is sketched about the incapacity of our education system to redress the appalling conditions of rural communities.

UNDERSTANDING THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSITION PROCESS

An understanding of the above claim can only be fully appreciated if it contextualised within the historical frame of the broader dynamics of the South African society. The transitional phase we are presently experiencing is significantly different to what leftists projected during the 1980s. For example, Sweezy and Magdoff identified South Africa as:

> The only country with a well developed modern capitalist structure which is not only objectively ripe for revolution but has actually entered a stage of overt and seemingly irreversible revolutionary struggle.[2]

It is my view that a strategic option to redress historical imbalances and to create conditions to facilitate a movement towards a more egalitarian society, is to interpret our transition within the frame of structural reform. Given the options of reform, revolution and structural reform at this stage of our history, and being cognizant of the collapse of socialism, it seems obvious that the option of structural reform would be the most strategic choice to enhance the realisation of emancipatory educational goals. Surely, this is not an easy choice and at various points it is difficult to defend such a position. At this juncture, a key question to ask is: What is meant by structural reform and how does it differ from mere reformism? In referring to the works of Andre Gorz, John Saul states that:

> Any reform, to be structural, must be comfortably self-conscious to implicate other necessary reforms that flow from it as part of an emerging project of structural transformation.[3]

He continues by quoting Gorz: "Any intermediary reforms ... are to be regarded as a means and not an end, as dynamic phases in a progressive struggle, not as stopping at places".[4] Being aware of the arguments around notices of epiphenomenalism and determinism, I apply the concept of structural reform at the superstructural level, in an attempt to provide a grid in grasping how the rural masses could be further marginalised.

CONCRETISING STRUCTURAL REFORM

By making these initial remarks about structural reform, I will now turn to concretise and problematise it briefly within the context of the rural political economy of the Border-Kei region. The location of structural reform within this region is important, because it is uncontestable that inhabitants of this area have always been in the forefront of advocating the ideals of liberation movements, and it is most likely that a future progressive majority government would draw a large proportion of votes from this constituency. This region is also significant because it has been and will in the future be a main terrain of contestation in terms of political and economic control of any future government.

However, the following are stark realities of the region:

- The country's highest level of unemployment (over 80% of the work force in certain districts) is in this region;
- The largest economic sector is that of community services, of which health and education in many areas are either non-existent or near collapse;

- 4,5 million people (12% of national total) live in this region of which 80% of the population reside in under-developed rural areas. Latest census figures indicate 4,5 million people live in Transkei alone[5]; and
- 88% of the population in the region of Transkei is functionally illiterate.[6]

If my assumption is correct that a progressive future government would draw a large proportion of votes from this region, the masses would obviously be expecting the delivery of basic political and economic goods. Put in another way, assurance of political support also implies the provision and an increase of basic needs. In the case where a future progressive government would be fairly in charge of the political commanding heights (of which I am very pessimistic) like the military, foreign policy, cultural system, etcetera, and be in favour of providing increased monetary wages (e.g. salaries) and social wages (e.g. housing, health), which is reform-oriented may obstruct such policies.[7] Given this kind of scenario, it is possible that a disjunction between economic power and political power could emerge.[8] Political power is defined as the control over political structures, while economic power refers to the capacity to withhold or to reduce investment. The key point is that capital has the capacity to stifle egalitarian practises exercised by government. It is pure logic that the injection of capital in this region would be done in such a way as to control the powers that be.

In analyzing the interconnection and struggle between state and capital, Richard Fagan sums up the above scenario beautifully by stating that:

> The level of inflation (more specifically, the real purchasing power of the popular classes, since they are at least able to buffer themselves against rising prices) thus becomes a crucial political issue in the transition, even if planners do not perceive it as such. This is particularly the case with basic commodities and services (foodstuffs, fuel, clothing, mass transportation) that are very widely purchased and used.
>
> There is a point, not quantifiable, when grumbling about the price of rice and beans or a bus ticket ceases to be 'harmless' expression of discontent, and passes into the realm of a politically explosive issue.[9]

It could be argued that such an interpretation is parochial in the sense that a stakeholder, namely labour, is not being acknowledged as playing a constructive role in the structural reform process. I pointed out earlier in the paper that the educational and training frame of organised labour, does not address the issues of the rural poor, marginalised youth and so forth. The crux of the matter is that the Border-Kei region consists of 80% of people who live in under-developed rural areas, where organised labour has a minimum impact on the day-to-day activities of ordinary folk.

Implicit in the COSATU proposals with regard to education and training, is the advancement of a certain section of the working class, the employed, while the interests of especially the rural masses are undermined. The COSATU and ANC proposals are closely related to developments which have taken place in countries like the United Kingdom and Australia, where the emphasis of Adult Basic Education is on vocational training. The only difference with the above industrialised capitalist countries is COSATU's approach, which is linked to egalitarian economic and political strategies spearheaded by a strong state and a strong civil society. Surely, in terms of

structural reform this might be the best strategy to sustain change, but a range of questions remain unanswered, for example:

- Could a vocational mindset undermine the development of organs of civil society?
- Would a curriculum along vocational lines be able to address the needs of marginalised communities?
- To what extent would political education in such a proposed structure undermine alternative thinking and practices?

What is in essence being mapped out is some microcosm of development and under-development. The Joint Education Trust's preference to inject capital in projects with a work related orientation, is an example of how similar funders could undercut projects aiming to strengthen organs of civil society.

THE DILEMMA OF THE ADULT EDUCATOR

In broad terms, adult educators who are struggling for a more egalitarian society would support a discourse that is articulated in the pursuit of shared goods. As opposed to atomism, which is of an individualist nature, a shared good is something that is 'sought after and cherished in common ... shared goods are essentially of a community, their common appreciation is constitutive of them'.

Constant with the notion of shared goods, is Steven Brookfield's conceptualisation of Adult Education, where he argues that:

> It is that activity concerned to assist adults in their quest for a sense of control in their own lives, within their personal relationships, and with regard to the social forms and structures with which they live. Assisting adults to develop a sense of autonomous control in their lives is not to be equated with an atomistic isolation.

The notion of critical reflectivity, where the world is perceived not to be composed of fixed and unchallengeable givers is at the heart of Adult Education. A discourse of Adult Education that is critical believes in the realisation that circumstances can be altered and that adults can, in concert with others, engage in the collective changing of cultural forms.

The above conceptualisation sounds very impressive and may be attractive, but, as adult educators working towards a continuous struggle for democracy in South Africa, it is pivotal to ask whether we are in any way near to these kinds of practices? To answer this question, we need to take a hard look at the kind of philosophies of social science that have been obstructive to the notion of critical reflectivity.

Without going into detail about positivism, interpretavism and critical theory, I would claim that our main frame of education, of which adult education has historically been part, has mainly been influenced by positive thinking. If this claim is accepted, then one could assume that many South African educators practice education in a fairly uncritical and doctrinaire manner. What is especially characteristic about positivism, is the way in which conclusions could be reduced to some general principle, whereas critical thinking is context-bound. Critical thinking which is based on some general rule, or set of rules for the elimination of whole classes of claims is, at best, a simulcrum of critical thinking.

Given the vast and horrendous impact of Bantu Education as a philosophy of uncritical thinking, I tend to agree with Wally Morrow that doctrinaire thinking, which is characterised as the enemy of critical thinking, is a widespread disease in South Africa.

My major concern is to what extent features of doctrinaire thinking will be carried with us in our endeavour to articulate educational goals in a new dispensation. Also, our academic history of articulating extreme positions is full of flaws, and would influence similar kinds of doctrinaire thinking in future. I am thinking here specifically of people's education, which could entail a range of positivist elements. This grim look of structural reform engagement is further exacerbated in the sense that a new educational dispensation would still be occupied, to a certain extent, and influenced by reactionary discourses and personnel. As Fagan correctly states, the occupation of the commanding heights of the political system is incomplete because many second-and-third-level positions in the state apparatus (and occasionally even some top positions of a more technocratic sort) are occupied by persons not closely identified with and committed to a thorough-going transition.

Reactionary forces, especially in various departments of homelands, are of particular importance. Most of the intellectual elite is absorbed in government and parastatal structures, which has an organisational culture characterised by hostility to democratic ideals. In virtually all homelands, commissions of inquiry are the order of the day, investigating mismanagement of funds and other aspects of corruption.

The educational benefits marginalised rural people would be able to get from a new dispensation are further diminished by the latest international institutional arrangements that are presently under way. In tandem with the creation of a new world order, it seems that developing countries like South Africa might be forced to allow space for discourses put forward by international agencies like Unesco, which could be antithetical to the needs of the rural masses.

CONCLUSION

The writer is of the opinion that many of the claims, statements and arguments spelt out in the paper are not well developed and a more in-depth understanding and analysis is needed. However, it is felt that important ideas are being put forward, especially with regard to new class formations which are presently being structured. The practice of democracy, particularly in South Africa, is conflictual and problematic, and the role of adult educators will become more controversial in the future.

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONFERENCE

Marjorie Mbilinyi,
Clive Millar and Vis Naidoo

The purpose of this session was for panellists to give an overview of the different elements that have made up the conference and to draw out pertinent themes. They were also to make observations which could be taken into account in planning next year's conference. This is a brief summary of the presentations.

Marjorie Mbilinyi

1. She expressed warm appreciation for the opportunity to be at the conference.
2. The significance of the South African context was marked by the question of the transition moment – the priorities, format, content and processes. Some participants addressed issues of post-apartheid. There were matters of methodology and epistemology, with a tug of war between ethical and scientific issues.
3. The issue of methodology and process is clearly of central importance to adult educators. We need to increase our own self-reflexivity and that of our students. Adult education is a site of struggle as there are all kinds of adult educational practices. In thinking about the policy in adult education we need to recognise the 'tenacity with which old forms hold on'. We need to be analysing and organising in order to understand and challenge unequal gender, race/ethnic, class and imperial relationships.
4. In looking at the role of the universities, we need to sharpen our analytical tools to explain adult education, its history and its context. Are adult educators to continue to be part of social movements or to be more removed? How do we find ways to work together as academics and activists? There is pressure to make our work more relevant, but we also want autonomy.
5. In looking at the question of affirmative action, we need to see whether it is supportive or transformative of the status quo. We need to have a tighter theoretical understanding of racism and sexism.
6. Professionalisation of adult education raises the questions of transformative or conservative possibilities.
7. There has been a tendency to concentrate on problems rather than successes at the conference. It is important not to minimise successes. We should consider capturing the successes in order to remind ourselves of them at a later date!

Vis Naidoo

There were five reflections:

1. The conference was fairly generalised. Given the time, it may have been appropriate. In future conferences, we may want to have more focus so that we can get into issues more deeply.
2. In relation to the format of the conference, there was limited time for discussion so we need to consider ways of encouraging greater participation.
3. There could have been more focus on southern Africa. If we are to invite participants from southern Africa, we need to consciously develop our approach.
4. Some progress was made since the last conference. There were structured meetings and input from the certificate programmes; there was also a proposal agreed to for the exploration of the establishment of an association of university-based adult educators; a marked increase in the number of universities involved; and there was acknowledgement of the need to move towards professionalisation of the field.
5. Affirmative and national equity still elude this conference. This relates back to the staffing composition of the departments. There has been a definite improvement since last year in the number of black people and women who played prominent roles in the conference.

Clive Millar

1. We are having an identity crisis. The core of the conference was concerned with professionalisation of the field (mainstreaming), policy, critical theory (which was more developed this time), strategy (on the table and in the corridors).
2. There was anxiety – what were the sources? IDT, NEPI, Hani's assassination? Can we cope with post-apartheid South Africa? What does social transformation mean if it's not small, tiny?
3. The structure encouraged a collective mode, but it was not demanding enough.
4. We need to bring in much bigger resources as adult educators to help us with our tasks e.g. anthropologists, economists, political scientists.

Once the panel had made their remarks the discussion was opened to the floor. There were various ideas expressed for the organisers of the next conference to pick up concerning the ongoing debates about adult education theory and practise. The meeting closed with thanks being expressed to the organisers of the conference, particularly to Joe Samuels, the convenor. The organisation of the event was outstanding. Pethu Serote ended proceedings by presenting Marjorie Mbilinyi with a card from all the delegates, thanking her for her valuable contributions, and wishing her well. This was done in Swahili!